

GAZETTEER OF INDIA

WEST BENGAL



JALPAIGURI

WEST BENGAL DISTRICT GAZETTEERS



JALPĀIGURI

सत्यमेव जयते
By

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PREFACE

The Jalpāiguri District Gazetteer is the eleventh in the series of West Bengal District Gazetteers. An early Gazetteer on this district was written by J. F. Gruning in the series, *Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers — Jalpaiguri*, printed at Allahabad in 1911. *The District Census Handbook, 1951 — Jalpaiguri* by Asok Mitra, ICS (Retd.), presented further information.

The present volume was part of the Scheme for Revision of Gazetteers, jointly originated by the Governments of India and West Bengal. Its writing began in 1973; it was completed in 1974 and sent to press in 1978. Exigencies of power supply and other problems in the printing industry have regrettably delayed its publication. The Central Government part of the scheme came to an end in 1981. Unlike previous volumes, the volume is being published solely from the resources of the Government of West Bengal.

I have the pleasant duty of recording this office's gratefulness to various officers and members of the staff of the District Gazetteers Unit for their part in the publication of this volume, which was sent to the press before I took up my duties here. Shri A. M. Kusari, IAS (Retd.), originated the plan and edited the entire draft, before it went to press. Under the previous practice in this office, his name would have appeared as Editor of this volume. Dr. Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya, IAS (Retd.), and Shri Bimal Ranjan Chakraborti, IAS, who were his successors have also contributed to editing the volume.

The following officers made preliminary drafts. Chapters I, VI, VIII, XIII, XIV–XVII and XIX were written by Dr. Sankarananda Mukerji, WBCS, then Assistant Editor and at present Assistant Secretary, Finance Department, Government of West Bengal. Chapters II and III, XI and the second part of XVIII were written by Shri Pranabranjan Ray, Assistant Editor. Chapters IV and V were written by Shri Kiransanker Sengupta, WBCS, Research Officer (Retd.). Chapters VII, IX, X and XII and the first part of XVIII were written by Shri Satyaranjan Sengupta, Assistant Editor. The bibliography and index have been prepared by Smt. Subha Som, at present Research Officer.

The draft chapters were sent to New Delhi for scrutiny by the Central Gazetteers Unit of the Department of Culture, Ministry of Education, on the basis of whose comments certain changes have been made and incorporated in the body of the text. They were also scrutinized by the members of the Advisory Committee of the West Bengal District Gazetteers. Thanks of this office are extended to members at that time, Shri B. Sarkar, ICS (Retd.), Chairman, Dr. S. B. Choudhury, retired Vice-Chancellor, Burdwan University and Dr. P. C. Gupta, retired Vice-Chancellor, Rabindra Bharati University.

Photographs of places illustrated in the text have been supplied by the Information and Cultural Affairs Department, Government of West Bengal, and of people, by the Cultural Research Institute, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department, Government of West Bengal.

The then Head Assistant of this office and all his colleagues, notably the Comparers, Copy-Holders, Typists, Stenographers, Proof-Readers, Publication Assistant and Research Assistants sincerely cooperated in writing and publishing of this volume. In particular, Shri Debabrata Ray Majumdar, Publication Assistant and the publication staff associated with him have exerted themselves in seeing the volume through the press; and Shri P. Ray, Assistant Editor took much of the load of supervising the last stages of publication off my shoulders. My thanks are expressed to all of them.

We trust that this volume will be useful to all concerned with life and affairs in Jalpāiguri district. If some errors do indeed remain and are pointed out to this office, no pains will be spared to incorporate corrections in later edition or revision of this volume.

BARUN DE
Honorary State Editor

1st July, 1981.
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CONTENTS

PAGES

CHAPTER I : GENERAL

INTRODUCTORY: Origin of the name: Location, boundaries, etc. (1-2): History of the district as an administrative unit (3): Sub-divisions police stations, Blocks, etc. (3-4): Changes in locale of administration (4): Changes in component parts (4): Boundary disputes (4-8): TOPOGRAPHY (8-9): Hills (9): The River system (9-16): Floods (16-20): Tistā Guns (20-21): Geological antiquity (21-25): Mineral Occurrences (25-26): LOCALITY INDEX (26): VEGETATION (26-30): Forest (30-32): FAUNA (32-35): Jaldapara Wild Life Sanctuary (32-34): Garumara Wild Life Sanctuary (34): Chapramari Wild Life Sanctuary (34-35): CLIMATE (35-41): APPENDIX A — Jalpāiguri Town Protective Works (42-46): APPENDIX B — A folktale of the Tistā and the Tistā Gun in Jalpāiguri District (47).

1-47

CHAPTER II : HISTORY

PRE-HISTORY AND PROTO-HISTORY (48-49): ANCIENT HISTORY (49-52): MEDIEVAL PERIOD (52-59): MODERN PERIOD (59-63): Mutiny, 1857 (63): Freedom movement (63-66).

48-66

CHAPTER III : PEOPLE

POPULATION (67): Growth of Population (67-73): Migration (73): Density of population (73-75): Sex-ratio (75): Rural-Urban distribution (75-76): LANGUAGE (77-81): Bengali (77): Kurukh-Oraon (77-78): Languages of Nepalese origin (78): Hindi (78-79): Urdu (79): Sadani or Sadri (79): Madhesi (80): Mundā (80): Sāntālī (80): Rājibansi (80): Bodo or Boro (80-81): Mech (81): Rabha (81): Malpahari (81): Toto (81): RELIGION (82-87): Hinduism (82-85): Religion of the Santals, Oraons, Mundas and Hos (85): Reform movements (85): Islam (86): Christianity (86-87): Buddhism (87): Jains and Sikhs (87): SOCIAL LIFE (87-94): Family (87-89): Inheritance (89): Marriage (89-92): Dress (92): Houses (92-94): APPENDIX A — Table 8: Growth of Towns in Jalpaiguri District 1901-71 (95-96): APPENDIX B — Table 12: Number of cases relating to marital relations in the Hindu community in the district for some selected years (97-98).

67-98

CHAPTER IV : AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION

Land Reclamation and Utilization (99): Cultivable waste (99-100): IRRIGATION (100-03): Irrigation facilities: rivers (100-01): Types of irrigation in vogue (101): Minor irrigation (102): TISTĀ BARRAGE PROJECT (102-03): AGRICULTURE INCLUDING HORTICULTURE (103-07): Cropping pattern (103-04): Rice (104-05): Jute (105): Tobacco (105): Per acre yield of different crops (105-06): Progress of Scientific Agriculture (106-07): Seeds (107): Manures (108): Fertilizer (108): Crop rotation (108): Agricultural diseases and pests (108-09): State assistance to agriculture (109): Co-operative Societies (109-10): Activities of the Agriculture Department (110): ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND FISHERIES (110-15): Fodder crops (110-11): Piggery development scheme (111): State Poultry Farm (112): Poultry Extension Centre (112): Measures to improve breeds (112): Veterinary Aid (112-13): Artificial Insemination Centres (113): Vaccination (113-14): Live-stock statistics (114): FISHERIES (115): FORESTRY (115-17): Forest Produce (116-17): FLOODS, FAMINES & DROUGHTS (117-20): Flood (117-20): Famines (120): APPENDIX —

Table 2 : Abstract of culturable Waste Land Blocks of 100 Acres and above in Jalpāiguri District: 1944-45 (121). ...	99-121
--	--------

CHAPTER V : INDUSTRIES

OLD-TIME INDUSTRIES (122): RISE OF NEW INDUSTRIES (122-24): Rural Electrification Work (124): Sale of Electricity (124): INDUSTRIES AND MANUFACTURE (124-27): Minerals (125): Cottage and Small-scale industries (125): Registered and un-registered industrial units (125-26): Small-scale industries (126-27): Ericulture Industries (127): Assistance under State Aid to Industries Act (127-29): Other financial institutions (129): Assistance to industrial co-operatives (130): Registration of Small-Scale Industrial Units (130): Manufacture of tea (130-31): Cultivation of tea (131-33): The packaging and distribution of tea (133): Indian Tea Planters' Association (133-34): Production of tea in 1972-73 (134): Damage to tea plantations (135): Industrial potential and plans for future development (135): Welfare of Industrial labour (135-36): Minimum Wages Act (136): Industrial disputes (136-37). ...	122-37
--	--------

CHAPTER VI : BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

HISTORY OF BANKING (138-39): Credit Facilities (139-42): INDEBTEDNESS (142-44): For all agricultural families (142-44): Industrial Loans (144): THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT (144-47): Loans advanced by co-operatives (146): Jalpaiguri Central Co-Operative Bank (147): Land Mortgage Banks (147-49): Trade (149): AGRICULTURAL MARKETING (149-50): Processing (150): Storage (151): Ware houses (151): TRADE ASSOCIATIONS (151): APPENDIX A—Debts Incurred by the Rural Families of Jalpāiguri District: 1366 B.S. (152): APPENDIX (B—Debts in the Rural Areas of Jalpāiguri District: 1366 B.S. (153): APPENDIX C—Average Debt per Family Classified According to Credit Agency in Jalpāiguri District: 1951-52 (154): APPENDIX D—Cash Loans Borrowed in Jalpāiguri District: 1951-52 (154): APPENDIX E—Average Borrowings Classified According to Credit Agencies in Jalpāiguri District: 1957 (155): APPENDIX F—Average Debt Classified According to Credit Agency in Jalpāiguri District: 1957 (156): APPENDIX G—List of Important Markets/Hāts in Jalpāiguri District (157-59): APPENDIX H—List of Fairs and Festivals in Jalpāiguri District (160-62). ...	138-62
--	--------

CHAPTER VII : COMMUNICATIONS

ROAD TRANSPORT (163-65): Vehicles and conveyances (164): NBSTC (164): Private operators (165): Hāt bus (165): Taxi (contract carriage) (165): Auto-rickshaw (165): EARLY RAIL ROADS (166-67): Northern Bengal State Railway (166): Bengal Duārs Railway (166-67): Cooch Behār State Railway (167): PRESENT POSITION (167-70): Assam Link Railway (167): Broad Gauge Railway (167-69): Present rail roads (169-70): TRADE (170): WATERWAYS AND FERRIES (170): TRAVEL AND TOURIST FACILITIES (170-71): POST AND TELEGRAPHS (171-73): ORGANISATIONS OF TRANSPORT OWNERS AND EMPLOYEES (173). ...	163-73
---	--------

CHAPTER VIII : MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (174): MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION (174-75): ZILLA PARISHAD ADMINISTRATION (175): LEARNED PROFESSIONS	
--	--

	PAGES
(175-77): DOMESTIC AND PERSONAL SERVICES (177): LABOUR ORGANISATIONS (177-80).	174-80

CHAPTER IX : ECONOMIC TRENDS

LIVELIHOOD PATTERNS (181-82): District Total (182): GENERAL LEVEL OF PRICES (182-85): RURAL WAGES (186-87): FAMILY BUDGET (187-88): EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE (188-90): COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (190-92).	181-92
--	--------

CHAPTER X : GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

STATE GOVERNMENT SET-UP (193-94): Block Administration (194): CENTRAL GOVERNMENT SET-UP (194-95): Excise (194): Railway (195) Posts and Telegraphs (195): Intelligence (195): Small Savings (195): OTHER STATUTORY BODIES (195): North Bengal Flood Control Board and Commission (195-96): West Bengal State Electricity Board (196-97): North Bengal State Transport Corporation (197-98): Life Insurance Corporation of India (198): Food Corporation of India (198).	193-98
--	--------

CHAPTER XI : REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

HISTORY OF LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION (199-211): Mughal Period (199-200): East India Company takes over <i>Diwani</i> (200-01): Dr. Buchanan Hamilton's account, Patgram (201-02): Boda (202-03): Baikunthapur (203-04): FORMATION OF DISTRICT (204): Survey & Settlement (204-06): Land Relations (206-10): Special Settlement; Garo & Mech Colony (210): Totos of Totopara (210): Santal Colony (210-11): LAND REFORMS AND PRESENT SYSTEM OF LAND REVENUE AND MANAGEMENT (211-13): Organization for land revenue (213): Land Revenue (213): Tea grant (213): Income from forests (214): AGRICULTURAL INCOME TAX (214): STATE EXCISE (214-15): CENTRAL EXCISE (215): COMMERCIAL TAXES (215-16): MOTOR VEHICLES TAX, REGISTRATION, ETC. (216-17): REGISTRATION (217).	199-217
---	---------

CHAPTER XII : LAW, ORDER AND JUSTICE

INCIDENCE OF CRIME (218-19): Enforcement of crimes (219): Prosecution and convictions (219-20): Excise offence (220): ORGANISATION OF THE POLICE FORCE (220-21): Present Police personnel (220): Home Guard (221): Rural Police (221): JAILS AND LOCK UPS (221-22): Prison discipline (222): Welfare of prisoners (222): ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE (222-25): Present set up (224): Criminal Justice (225): Work Load (225): LEGAL PROFESSION AND BAR ASSOCIATION (225): Probation of Offenders' Act (225-26): APPENDIX A (227): APPENDIX B (228).	218-28
--	--------

CHAPTER XIII : OTHER DEPARTMENTS

PUBLIC WORKS (229): AGRICULTURE (229-30): Agriculture (Irrigation) Engineering Wing (230): Agriculture (Mechanical) Engineering Wing (230): Agriculture (Marketing) (230-31): ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND VETERINARY SERVICES (231-32): Veterinary (231): Livestock (231): Poultry (231-32): FISHERIES (232): COTTAGE AND SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (232): Industries (232-33): Sericulture (233): FOREST (233-34): Jalpaiguri Forest Division	
--	--

(233): Baikunthapur Forest Division, Siliguri (233): Koch Bihar Forest Division (233-34): Buxa Forest Division (234): LABOUR (234-35): COOPERATION (235): District Co-operative Union (235): COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIES (235): Weights and Measures (235-36): INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS (236): FINANCE (236-37): Statistics (236): Agricultural Income Tax (237): REFUGEE REHABILITATION (237): FOOD AND SUPPLIES (237). ...	229-37
--	--------

CHAPTER XIV : LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

History of Local Self-Government in the district (238): The Roadcess Committee (238-39): District Board (239-40): Local Boards (240): Union Boards (240-41): Zilla Parishad (241): Anchalik Parishad (242): Anchal Panchayats (242-44): Gram Panchayats (244-45): New Developments (246): Jalpaiguri Municipality (246-49): Water Supply (247): Education (247-48): Street lighting (248): Town Compost Manure Scheme (248): Drainage (248): Market (248-49): Roads & Culverts (249): Income & Expenditure (249): Demand & Collection (249): Alipur Duar Municipality (249-50): Water Supply (249-50): Street lighting (250): Market (250): Pound (250): Road (250): Public Health (250): Income & Expenditure (250): APPENDIX A --- Income & Expenditure of Jalpaiguri Zilla Parishad: 1970-71 (251): APPENDIX B --- Income & Expenditure of the Anchal Panchayats in Jalpaiguri District: 1970-71 (252): APPENDIX C --- Income and Expenditure of the Gram Panchayats in Jalpaiguri District: 1970-71 (253). ...	238-53
--	--------

CHAPTER XV : EDUCATION AND CULTURE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (254-55): Schools (255): Secondary education (255-58): Primary education (258-59): Pre-primary education (259-60): Literacy (260-61): Collegiate education (261-62): Teachers' Training (262): Industrial Schools (262-63): Medical School (263): Pharmacy Training Centre (263): Engineering College (263): Nurses' Training (263): Education of the Backward Classes (263-64): Sanskrit education (264): Adult Education (264): Social Welfare (265): Social Education (265): District Library Association (265-66): Sponsored Rural Libraries (266): Physical Education and Youth Welfare (266): District Sports Association (266): Subdivisional Sports Association (266): Indian Schools Sports Association (267): Bharat Scouts and Guides Association (267): National Cadet and Auxiliary Cadet Corps (267): Youth Hostels (267): Children's Park (267): Clubs (267): Stadium (267): Learned Societies (267): Education in Tea Gardens (267): Mission Schools (268): APPENDIX A --- Rural Libraries of Jalpaiguri District: 1974 (269).	254-69
--	--------

CHAPTER XVI : MEDICAL & PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

SURVEY OF PUBLIC HEALTH & MEDICAL FACILITIES IN EARLY TIMES (270-76): VITAL STATISTICS (276-77): Model Registration (Deaths): in Primary Health Centre Areas (277): Hospital data (277): Sample registration (278): Half-Yearly Census (278): Death by age-group (278-79): Infant deaths (279-81): Live and still Births (281): DISEASES COMMON TO THE DISTRICT (281-82): PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES (283): MEDICAL ADMINISTRATION (283-84): PRIVATE HOSPITALS (284-85): Medical facilities in tea gardens (285): PUBLIC HEALTH WELFARE ACTIVITIES (286-89): School Health (286): Anti-tuberculosis activities (286): Family Planning
--

(286-88): Anti-malaria activities (288): Anti-leprosy work (288): Pharmacy Training Centre, Jalpaiguri (289): SANITATION (289-90): Water supply (291): Conservancy (291): Drainage (291): RURAL WATER SUPPLY (292): APPENDIX A — Patients Treated in Recognised Hospitals and Health Centres in Jalpaiguri District: 1961-66 (293-95): APPENDIX B — Deaths from selected causes in Jalpaiguri District: 1961-66 (296): APPENDIX C — Medical Institutions in Jalpaiguri District: 1972 (297-300). ...	270-300
--	---------

CHAPTER XVII : OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES

LABOUR WELFARE (301): PROHIBITION (301): ADVANCEMENT OF BACKWARD CLASSES AND TRIBES (302-03). ...	301-03
---	--------

CHAPTER XVIII : PUBLIC LIFE & VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE DISTRICT IN THE STATE AND UNION LEGISLATURES (304-09): Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly) (304-08): Lok Sabha (House of the People) (308-09): POLITICAL PARTIES AND ORGANISATIONS (310-14): Vidhan Sabha (310-12): Lok Sabha (312-14): Vidhan Parishad (Legislative Council) (314): NEWSPAPERS (314-15): VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS (315-17): Women's Welfare (316): Child Welfare (316): Tribal Welfare (317). ...	304-17
---	--------

CHAPTER XIX : PLACES OF INTEREST

ALIPUR DUAR (318): AMBARI FALAKATA (318): BAGRAKOT (318): BANARHAT (319): BARNES (319): BHELAKOBA (319): BUXA (319): CHALSA (319): CHOBOTA SINCHULA (319-20): DAM DIM (320): DHUPGURI (320): DOMOHANI (320): FALAKATA (320): GAIRKATA (320-21): GARH MENDABARI (321-22): GORUMARA (322): HAMILTONGANJ (322): HASIMARA (322): JALDAPARA (322): JALPAIGURI (322-23): JALPES (323-24): KAMAKHYAGURI (324): KUMARGRAM (324-25): LATAGURI (325): MADARIHAT (325): MAYNAGURI (325-26): MAL (326): MATIALI HAT (326): NAGRAKATA (326-27): NEW MAYNAGURI (327): ODLABARI (327-28): PURBADEHAR (328): RAJABHATKHAWA (328): RAJGANJ (328): RAMSHAI (328-29): SANNYASIR HAT (329). ...	318-29
---	--------

ART PLATES Fig.: I—XXIII	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	331-41
INDEX	342-50
ERRATA	351

ADDENDUM

For administrative reasons the Police Station of Madarihat was bifurcated into the police stations of Madarihat and Birpārā on the 10th January 1967. The name of the new Police Station of Birpārā does not usually occur in the text.



CHAPTER I

GENERAL

Jalpāiguri is said to have derived its name from the olive trees (*Jalpāi* in Bengali) which grew in the town and were seen even in 1900. The suffix *guri* means a place. The name might as well be associated with Jalpeś, the presiding deity (Śiva) of the entire region who had been in the minds of men there from time immemorial.

INTRODUCTORY
Origin of the name

We might also recall that the Jalpāiguri subdivision of Rangpur, so named since 1854, was coterminous with the earlier Sukhāni subdivision and it was the nucleus of the district formed in 1869. The local name of a place like Jalpāiguri, which happened to be the seat of a military cantonment, thus gave first its name to the subdivision and then to the district. Earlier in March 1849, Hooker had arrived at Jeelpigoree, which was then 'a large straggling village near the banks of the Teesta, a good way south of the forest' and at this place according to him, 'we were detained for several days, waiting for elephants with which to proceed northwards.' Naturally, 'Jeelpigoree' was then a point of transhipment in an area covered by forests.

The district lies between 26° 16' and 27° O' north latitude and between 88° 4' and 89° 53' east longitude. It comprises an area of 6,245 sq.km. as on 1 July 1971.

It had a population of 17,50,159 according to the census of 1971 showing a percentage increase of 28.90 over the decade beginning with 1961.

The present district consists of the Western Duārs since 1865 and the Jalpāiguri and Rājganj thanas of Rangpur district since 1869. The district so formed in 1869 is bounded in the north by the Dārjiling district and Bhutān, in the east by Assam, in the south by Rangpur district in Bānglādes̄h and Koch Bihār district and in the west by Dārjiling district and part of Bānglādes̄h. The respective areas of the two subdivisions of the district, Sadar and Ālipur Duārs, have varied from decade to decade as will appear from table 1.

Location,
boundaries,
etc.

VARIATION IN AREA, VILLAGE, POPULATION IN
JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1881-1971

	1881			1921			1971		
	Area in Sq. miles	No. of vill- ages	Popu- lation	Area in Sq. miles	No. of vill- ages	Popu- lation	Area in Sq. km.	No. of vill- ages	Popu- lation
Jalpāiguri District	2,346	441	3,16,575	2,427	412	6,95,946	6,245 (2,440 sq miles)	754	17,50,159
Sadar Sub- division	1,170	314	2,71,914	1,396	266	4,50,825	3,373.7 (1,317 sq. miles)	411	10,15,437
Ālipur Duārs Subdivision	1,176	127	44,661	1,031	146	2,43,231	2,787.5 (1,088 sq. miles)	343	7,34,722

The district has two well defined areas differing both in history and in administration. The older portion, mostly to the west of the Tistā, is a permanently settled area, i.e. settled permanently with Zamindars since 1793. The area to the east of the Tistā is known as the Western Duārs and is a strip of submontane country. Until the Constitution of India came into force on 26 January 1950, the Western Duārs of the district like the Dārjiling district was included in the list of Scheduled Districts under the Scheduled Districts Act of 1874. The early history in this connexion may be traced from the East Indian Company Act, 1773, known as the Regulating Act, which conferred legislative powers upon the Governor-General in Council for the first time. The Western Duārs area was outside the regulated zone, and under executive orders of Government some of the laws of the regulated territory were applied to this area. The Scheduled Districts Act of 1874 provided for application of some of the laws of the regulated territories to this district. The Government of India Act of 1919 declared the Dārjiling district, the Duārs and Jalpāiguri to be backward areas and the Governor-General was given powers to issue notifications directing that an Act of the Indian legislature shall not apply in those areas except with such modifications and exceptions as he may direct. He was also empowered to authorize the Governor to issue similar notification in respect of an Act of the local legislature. This position was a little modified by section 92 of the Government of India Act by which the Governor of the province was required specially to promulgate the application of the ordinary laws. Since the promulgation of the Indian Constitution there is no such thing as a scheduled or non-regulated district.

History of the district as an administrative unit

The district has two subdivisions, namely, Sadar or Jalpāiguri and Ālipur Duārs with their headquarters at Jalpāiguri and Ālipur Duār respectively.¹ Jalpāiguri is also the headquarters of the district and of the division of the same name. The Sadar subdivision consists of the police stations of Jalpāiguri, Rājganj, Maināguri, Nāgrākātā, Dhupguri, Māl and Mātiāli, while the Ālipur Duārs subdivision consists of the police stations of Mādārihāt, Fālākātā, Kālchini, Ālipur Duār and Kumārgrām.

Subdivisions, police stations, Blocks, etc.

¹ When formed, the district had two subdivisions, namely, Sadar and Fālākātā, separated by the Jaldhākā river.

There are in all 13 Development Blocks coterminous with the thanas, except Ālipur Duār which is divided into two, namely, Ālipur Duār I and Ālipur Duār II Blocks. The Zilla Parishad came into being on 23 October 1964. Anchalik Parishads number 13, each Parishad having jurisdiction over a Block. There are also 93 Anchal Panchayats and 575 Gram Panchayats. The total number of *mauzas* borne on the jurisdiction list is 802, of which only 14 are uninhabited. Inhabited *mauzas* number 774; 14 *mauzas* have been fully included in the urban areas.

Apart from the two municipal towns of Jalpāiguri and Ālipur Duār, there are six non-municipal towns like Ālipur Duār Railway Junction, Dhupguri, Domohani, Fālākātā, Maināguri and Māl according to the Census of 1971.

Changes in
locale of ad-
ministration

The district had many administrative changes since its formation in 1869. The Commissioner of the Koch Bihār division was at first the controlling authority in respect of civil and criminal matters. The district was included under different divisions successively for administrative convenience. Table 2 shows the divisions under which the district was placed in the past.

Changes in
component
parts

There had also been changes in internal jurisdiction. Table 3 illustrates such changes.

Boundary
disputes

The revenue survey and demarcation were carried out by Mr. J. H. O'Donel in 1866, who defined, surveyed and fixed the correct boundary for the first time. Then Bhutān boundary maps on scales of 4-inches and 8-inches to 1 mile were prepared under Mr. Brownfield in 1885-86. The boundary was re-demarcated by Capt. G. B. Hodgson in 1891-93 at the request of the Government of Bengal on the basis of Mr. J. H. O'Donel's demarcation. The relay of this section of the boundary was carried out by Major Hirst in 1907-09 on the basis of Hodgson's boundary. The section of boundary between B. P's 114 and 116 was demarcated by Mr. C. O'Donel in 1919. The same section was re-demarcated by Mr. J. Newton in 1930. The missing pillars were reconstructed with the help of traverse during 1949-51 period. The section of India (Jalpāiguri) - Bhutān boundary was jointly demarcated by India and Bhutān in 1969-71 seasons and 4-inches to 1 mile scale strip maps were prepared and accepted by the Plenipotentiaries of the two countries.

Table — 2

DIVISIONS CONTROLLING JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1869-1963

Year	Name of the Division	Headquarters	Remarks
1869	Koch Bihār	—	From 8 December 1868.
1875	Rājsāhi- Koch Bihār	Jalpāiguri	The change occurred on 10 September 1875 when the two commissionerships of Rājsāhi and Koch Bihār were placed under a single commissioner.
1883	Rājsāhi	Jalpāiguri*	In October 1883 the Mahārājā of Koch Bihār attained majority and took charge of his State on and from 8 November 1883. Hence, Koch Bihār-Rājsāhi Division was abolished.
1947	Presidency	Calcutta†	The change took place during the Partition of India. The new division was formed with effect from 17 August 1947.
1963	Jalpāiguri	Jalpāiguri	From 4 march 1963.

* In 1885 the headquarters was temporarily shifted to Rāmpur-Boāliā in Rājsāhi as the office at Jalpāiguri was gutted by fire. It was taken back to Jalpāiguri in 1888.

† There was a second headquarter at Jalpāiguri for northern districts.

Table — 3

CHANGES IN INTERNAL JURISDICTIONS IN JALPAIGURI
DISTRICT : 1870-1935

Year	Type of Changes	Remarks
1870	Area comprising Pātgrām police station included in the Fālākātā subdivision of the district	From 1 April 1870
1874	Subdivisional headquarter removed from Fālākātā to Buxā and the name changed to Buxā (Bhalkā) subdivision	18 April 1874
1876	Subdivisional headquarter removed from Buxā to Ālipur Duār and re-named Ālipur Duārs subdivision	
1888	Nāgrākātā outpost transferred from Ālipur Duārs subdivision to Sadar subdivision, the revenue jurisdiction remaining within Ālipur Duārs subdivision	25 July 1888
1895	Portion of Thana Sālbāri lying west of the rivers Duduyā and Rehti was transferred to Sadar subdivision. The two rivers formed the boundary between the two subdivisions	2 September 1895
1896	Duduyā, Kaluā and Rehti declared to be the boundary between the two subdivisions	27 July 1896
1935	Sadar subdivision was declared to include the areas of the police stations of Bodā, Pachāgarh, Debīganj, Rājganj, Titālyā, Pātgrām, Maināguri, Nāgrākātā, Dhupguri, Māl and Mātiāli	22 January 1935

Another boundary problem on the Koch Bihār side cropped up in 1895 when Koch Bihār was a princely State. Both sides agreed to abide by the line shown in O'Donel's map of 1868-70. The relaying was accepted in 1899 and the readjustment finalised in 1901. The matter was reopened in 1910 and the map was relaid in 1910-11 by O. J. Hart of the Survey Department of the Bengal Government. Hart's work was accepted by the Mahārājā of Koch Bihār and confirmed by the Government of India in November 1914 and April 1915 respectively.

Under the Radcliffe Award the southern police stations of Titālyā, Pachāgarh, Bodā, Debīganj and Pātgrām comprising a total area of 672 sq. miles were transferred to East Pākistān (now Bānglādesh).

Since 1950 some changes have also taken place in the jurisdiction of the district. Some enclaves have been transferred from Koch Bihār to this district. 17 *chhits* of the Haldibāri police station were transferred to the Jalpāiguri police station in 1952. A further adjustment of the district boundaries between Koch Bihār and Jalpāiguri has taken place in 1955 and 34 *chhits* were transferred to Jalpāiguri from Koch Bihār.

In course of demarcation of the boundary between Jalpāiguri and Dinājpur districts, a dispute was raised by Pākistān regarding South Berubāri Union No. 12 of Jalpāiguri police station, claiming that the entire Union should be included in Pākistān as per Radcliffe Award. The dispute was solved by Nehru-Noon Agreement of September, 1958 which says:

Berubāri Union No. 12

"This will be so divided as to give half the area to Pakistan the other half adjacent to India being retained by India. The division of Berubari Union No. 12 will be horizontal, starting from the north-east corner of Debiganj thana. The division should be made in such a manner that the Koch Bihar enclaves between Pachagar thana of East Pakistan and Berubari Union No. 12 of Jalpaiguri thana of West Bengal will remain connected as at present with Indian territory and will remain with India. The Koch Bihar enclaves lower down between Boda thana of East Pakistan and Berubari Union No. 12 will be exchanged along with the general exchange of enclaves and will go to Pakistan."¹

¹ cf. B. Ray — Census 1961 : West Bengal : District Census Handbook : Jalpaiguri, Calcutta, 1969, p. 11.

However, as per agreement signed between India and Bānglādes̄h (former East Pākistān) on 16 May 1974, India will retain the southern half of South Berubāri Union No. 12 and the adjacent enclaves, measuring an area of 2.64 sq. miles approximately, and in exchange Bānglādes̄h will retain the Dahagrām and Angarpotā enclaves. India will lease in perpetuity to Bānglādes̄h an area of 178 m. × 85 m. near Tin Bighā to connect Dahagrām with Pānbāri *mouza* (P. S. Pātgrām) of Bānglādes̄h.

TOPOGRAPHY

The district has a rectangular shape, the length being from west to east. The present bed of the Mahānandā which is approximately situated over the old bed of Tistā formed the western boundary before 1787. After 1787 the Mahānandā became the western boundary, while the eastern boundary is formed by the Sankosh. The area west of the Tistā is covered by a slightly undulating expanse of paddy fields and bushy jungles. It contains groves of bamboos, betelnut palms, jack-fruit trees and hamlets. The area has very little waste land. The Sadar subdivision has an extensive tract of about 77 miles of *śāl* forests, situated about 12 miles north-west of Jalpāiguri town. In the cold weather — specially in November and December — a magnificent view of the Dārjiling Himālayas including the Kānchenjunga can be had from this place. The tract east of the Tistā presents the look of a flat strip of country. The Tistā itself has some *char* lands growing valuable timber, but in the floods of 1950 and 1958 most of the *char* lands had been washed away. The Western Duārs have many rivers and streams intersecting the area in every direction. There are also large areas of *śāl* forests, heavy grass and reed jungle interspersed with wild cardamoms. The banks of rivers and streams grow tall grass and reeds. There are also cotton plants growing in the area. The entire area is full of tea gardens covered by thick tea bushes all around. In between the tea gardens there are some bungalows of the personnel connected with tea. Human settlements have grown at the crossings and junctions of roads. The scenery to the north of the Duārs is picturesque, specially where the large rivers debouch into the plains.

The most impressive forests are between the Dima and the Jayanti and between the Jayanti and the Sankosh. The reserved forests with small patches of cultivated lands and villages can be seen at these places. They go up to the hills, specially in areas

like Buxā and Sinchulā and Sachaphu. The forests to the west of Torsā, namely, Chāprāmāri, Garumārā and Māraghāt present a splendid sight. Such views are also presented by the Nīlpārā and Chilāpātā-Mendābāri forests between the Torsā and the Dima and the Jayanti and Sachaphu forests between the Dima and Sankosh. The Ālipur-Buxā road also presents a wonderful view with its *śāl*, *saj*, *champ*, *sida* and other trees growing high on both sides of the road. In the Sachaphu forest orchids come out in March and April.

The Buxā area is the only mountainous tract of the district. Chhota Sinchulā (5,695'), one of the highest peaks of the Sinchulā range, offers a splendid view all around. Numerous rivers and streams intersect the extensive tracts of *śāl* and other forests reaching up to the hills. The Sinchulā range has an elevation between 4,000' and 6,000', the highest peak Renigango being 6,222' above sea level. Below Sinchulā and on a range of hills between 1,659' and 2,457' is situated the former political prisoners' camp which was located in the erstwhile Buxā cantonment. The Sinchulā is much wooded, though it can be reached by men and the beasts of burden from all sides.

Hills

The rivers which are numerous and flow north-south, originate from Sikkim, Bhutān and Dārjiling hills (except Torsā which originates from Tibet), and can be divided into two systems, namely, the Brahmaputra river system and the Gaṅgā river system. The Brahmaputra river system contains the following rivers, namely, Tistā (with its tributaries), Jaldhākā, Torsā, Kālajāni, Rāidāk and Sankosh, while the Gaṅgā river system contains the Mahānandā with its tributaries. Some of the main rivers are described below.

The River system

The Mahānandā, originating at Chimli at an altitude of 2,060 m. or 6,763' in the Dārjiling district and flowing in a southerly direction, alters its course slightly at Siliguri and then enters the Jalpāiguri district, remaining there for some distance. It has a total catchment area of 25,043 sq. km. (9,669 sq. miles) at its confluence with the Gaṅgā out of which 6,755 sq. km. (2,608 sq. miles) lies in West Bengal.¹

Mahānandā

¹ S. K. Roy — 'Flood Control' in *Advanced course on Flood Control, Drainage & Irrigation for Polytechnic Teachers*, June, 1973, Jalpāiguri Polytechnic Institute, Jalpāiguri, 1973, (cyclostyled), p. 4.

The river also goes by the name of *Mahānadī* which is said to be a Bengali corruption of the Lepchā word *Mahaldi*.¹

Dr. Francis Buchanan Hamilton writing in 1809 thus narrates the course of the river within the district. So far as the river continues on the frontier of the district, it is inconsiderable. It has, indeed, a channel of no small size, being perhaps 300 yards wide; but in the dry season the quantity of water is trifling, and even in the highest floods does not rise over the banks. It rises suddenly and falls quickly, so that boats do not attempt to navigate it; and even in the rainy season it is only frequented by canoes, which ascend with difficulty, but aid in floating down a little timber. In dry weather its stream is beautifully clear. The river also receives at various points three small branches, which arise from springs in the fields of *Sannyāsikātā*. They are called *Trināi*, *Ronchondi* and the divided courses of *Chokor* and *Dauk*.

Tistā

The *Tistā* is the largest river of North Bengal and passes through this district. It originates from the glaciers of North Sikkim at an altitude of 6,400 metres (21,000'). Large parts of Sikkim and *Dārjiling* district form its catchment before it enters the plains near *Sivok*. It enters the district at its north-west corner. It is formed mainly by the union of two streams, *Lachen* and *Lachung* at *Chunthang* in Sikkim. It flows through *Baikunṭhapur* and by the east of *Jalpāiguri* town. It has been identified with the Vedic *Sadānīra*,² though such identification cannot be fully accepted.³ It has been suggested that *Sadānīra* formed the western boundary of *Prāgyotishpur* (Assam) during the ancient days, that the *Kośala* king fought with the *Paṇis* on its bank, that this river was known as *Karatoyā* in the Purāṇic days, that *Karatoyā* has been mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* and that *Mahāsthāngarh* (now in *Bogrā* in *Bānglādesh*) was situated on the bank of the *Karatoyā*. The Chinese pilgrim *Yuan Chwang* crossed this river to go to *Prāgyotishpur*.⁴ It is said that the

¹ J. F. Gruning — *Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers : Jalpāiguri*. Allahabad, 1911, p. 4.

² C. C. Sanyal — 'Tistā-Karatoyā Rūp-rekhā' (in Bengali) in *Jalpāiguri District Centenary Souvenir*, Jalpāiguri, 1970, p. 348.

³ cf. D. C. Sircar — *Geography of Ancient and Medieval India*, Delhi, 1960, p. 45 : "Sadānīra cannot be satisfactorily identified."

⁴ *Yuan Chwang* went from *Paundravardhana* to *Kāmarūpa* in January-February of A.D. 639. *Cunningham* says, "... I infer that the capital visited by *Hwen Tssang* was not *Gohati*, in the valley of the *Brahmaputra*, but *Kamatiputra*, in the Indian district of *Kusa-Vihāra*. The great river crossed by the pilgrim would therefore be the *Tista*, and not the *Brahmaputra*" (*Vide A. Cunningham — The Ancient Geography of India, Vārānasi*, 1963 reprint, p. 422).

Boḍos named this river Tistā or Distā as in the Boḍo language *ti* and *di* stand for water. It has been suggested that *Sadānīra* is rendered as Tistā in the Boḍo language. It is said that the Tistā-Karatoyā of the plains took the name of Korto when the Koches came down to Prāgiyotishpur, while the name of the river in the hills remained Tistā.

The western and southern regions of the catchment are formed of softer phyllitic strata. These strata being of sedimentary origin are liable to slip and slide along planes of unstable joints when the geological formation dips at an angle greater than the slope of the hills. The hill streams have a gradient as steep as 1 in 16. The cataract of the Himālayan rivers leads to the increase in sediment varying from boulder to coarse sand. Moving down the stream they are converted by the process of attrition into sand and silt. Seismic movements of the area also loosen the hill sides, causing rock slides and further increasing the silt deposition in the river. Man-made causes like shifting cultivation, deforestation and open grazing on the hill slopes also accelerate soil erosion and deposition of silt.

The Tistā after being fed by several tributaries in the Himālayan and sub-Himālayan regions, is narrow and deep, before entering the plains near Sivok. After entering the plains, it is, however, considerably wide ranging from 3.2 km. to 10.8 km. (2 miles to about 7 miles). In the sub-Himālayan plains, it is again joined by several tributaries, namely, Līsh, Gish, Chel and Neorā from the north-eastern and Karalā from the north-western sides.¹

The Tistā has been changing its course for years. The following summary report explains the Tistā-Karatoyā river system as obtaining within the district.²

1. Tistā and Karatoyā are names of the same river in the hills.
2. Prior to 1787 the two rivers jointly used to empty themselves first into the Gaṅgā and then into the sea.
3. Along with the floods there might have been earthquakes in the area in 1787 resulting in great landslips and bringing about changes in the hills to the north and south of Sivok.

¹ K. N. Kapoor — 'Flood Control with Special Reference to River Tista' in *Advanced Course on Flood Control, Drainage and Irrigation for Polytechnic Teachers*, June, 1973, Jalpāiguri Polytechnic Institute, Jalpāiguri.

² C. C. Sanyal — *op. cit.* pp. 353-54.

4. A few miles to the south of Sivok the plains suddenly change to high lands and form the Baikunṭhapur forest, and hence no connexion could be established with the Mahānandā.
5. The Tistā carried its waters to the east and passed through the Dadai and the Gharghariā rivers.
6. The Karatoyā went up into the hills of the Baikunṭhapur forest and no connexion remained with the Tistā.
7. The new Tistā passed through Maṇḍalghāt and Haldibāri till it converged with the Karatoyā at Debiganj in the south. But this course of the Tistā also dried up as she took up another course.
8. In the floods of 1950 the old Tistā went due west and converged with the Pānga-Jamunā rivers and through them with the Karatoyā.
9. The wide course of Tistā-Karatoyā dried up and *char* lands appeared in the middle. Two courses, namely, Karatoyā and Sāun, three miles apart from each other, however, remained.
10. The Karalā rises two miles to the east of Karatoyā in the Baikunṭhapur forest. This river converges with Tistā at a point south of Jalpāiguri town. It has no connexion with the Tistā as its source.
11. During 1827 and 1868-70 the Tistā moved further east, and the eastward movement still continues.

At the time of Rennell's survey (1779) the Tistā below Jalpāiguri branched off into three channels, namely, the Dhopā-Punarbhavā to the south-west, the Ātrāi due south and the Jamunā to the south-east. These streams then discharged themselves into the Gaṅgā, the Ātrāi being the major channel. There was a very small branch of Ātrāi flowing south-east known as Tistā creek which discharged itself into the Brahmaputra system. In the period between 1951 and 1963 the average width of the river had increased by about 1,500 metres.¹

Table 4 shows the catchment areas of the river and its tributaries at different points.

The Karalā river is one of the tributaries of the river Tistā on its right bank. It originates from the Baikunṭhapur forest in Rājganj police station and flows down to the Tistā at King's ghāt in Jalpāiguri town. An area of 54.5 sq. miles drains into

Karalā

¹ S. K. Roy, *op. cit.* p. 2.

the Tistā through this river. The major part of the catchment of this river is situated in the forest areas of the Baikunṭhapur Range. In the lower reach the river passes through open

Table — 4

CATCHMENT AREAS OF THE TISTĀ : 1973¹

Name of river	Location	Catchment area		Calculated Peak discharge (in cusecs)
		Sq. km.	Sq. mile	
Tistā	Snow line	2,479	954	..
	Range (Sikkim border)	6,220	2,065	3,92,600
	Anderson bridge	7,612	2,939	5,79,300
	Coronation bridge	9,350	3,113	6,16,900
	Jalpāiguri	9,270	3,579	7,12,870
	Bānglādesh border	10,205	3,940	7,61,130
	Confluence with Brahmaputra	12,650	4,879	..
Lachen		694	268	68,950
Lachhund chu		984	380	93,400
Talung chu		811	313	81,490
Dik chu		241	93	65,280
Rongni chu		246	95	66,330
Rangpo		572	221	1,24,900
Great Rangit		2,129	822	3,13,100
Rilli		166	64	49,320
Līsh		62	24	23,448
Gish		215	83	54,047
Dharlā (Chel, Māl and Neorā combined)		684	264	1,60,760
Karalā		141	54.5	15,920

¹ *Loc. cit.*

country with villages and agricultural land by its sides. In the last two miles the river flows through Jalpāiguri town dividing it into two halves, the left bank having administrative offices and the right bank being occupied by markets, shopping centres, etc.

Dhardharā

A tributary named Dhardharā having a catchment of 5.4 sq. miles falls into Karalā within Jalpāiguri town near the hospital.

Chuk chukā

Two other tributaries named Chuk chukā and Ruk rukā also fall into Karalā within the northern extension of Jalpāiguri town near the Engineering College.

Duduyā

Duduyā is formed by the combined waters of the Goyerkātā, Nanāi, Angārbhāsha and other small streams, all of which rise in the north-west of the Duārs. It flows in a south-easterly direction and then enters the Koch Bihār district. Its principal tributaries are the Kaluā or Rehti, Barabank, Dim-Dima and Tasāti, which rise in the Bhutān hills or north of the Duārs and join it on its east or left bank.

Mujnai

The Mujnai rises in the southern slopes of the Bhutān hills near Hāntupārā and after winding in a southerly direction enters Koch Bihār just below Fālākātā.

Torsā

The Torsā originates in the Chumbi valley in Southern Tibet at an elevation of 7,060 metres (23,180'). It flows for about 144 km. (90 miles) in West Bengal. On leaving West Bengal it flows through Bānglādes̄h and joins the Brahmaputra near Nāgeswari in the Rangpur district. The Rāidāk and the Sankosh rivers join it on its left bank in Bānglādes̄h before merging into the Brahmaputra. The river bifurcates into two courses, namely, Chaur Torsā (West) and Sili Torsā (East) just below the Hāsimārā road bridge. The two courses converge near Pātālā khāwā forest in the Koch Bihār district after flowing separately for a distance of about 40 km. (25 miles). Before 1954, Sili Torsā, the eastern course, used to carry the major portion of the discharge, but after the floods of 1954 Chaur Torsā, the western course, began taking a greater portion of the discharge. At present, however, Sili Torsā is the major channnel. The annual rainfall in the catchment areas varies between 380 cm. and 660 cm. (150" and 260").

Table 5 shows the catchment areas of the river at some points within the district.

Table — 5

CATCHMENT AREAS OF THE TORSĀ IN JALPĀIGURI
DISTRICT : 1973

Location	Catchment area		Calculated peak discharge (in cusecs)
	Sq. km.	Sq. miles.	
Hāsimārā Railway bridge	3,968	1,532	4,45,360
Broadgauge Railway bridge	4,432	1,711	4,78,970

This river has started an eastward movement for quite some-time past. In 1932-33, there was a menacing movement inasmuch as the Forest Range headquarters buildings at Nīlpārā were in danger. Protective embankments were erected in 1934-35, but later in 1938-39 it was considered futile to erect any more embankment and the Range headquarters was shifted further east.

The Kālajāni is formed by the combined waters of the Alaikuri and Dima, these two taking the name of Kālajāni after their junction at Ālipur Duār. It has a course of only a few miles in the district, marking the boundary with the Koch Bihār district. It has no important tributary on its right or west bank, but on the left or east bank it gets the waters of the Nanāi, Cheko and Gadādhār. The Alaikuri is a large river, supplying the greatest quantity of water to the Kālajāni. The Alaikuri rises in the Bhutān hills, and after a southerly and southeasterly course joins the Dima at Ālipur Duār. Its main tributaries on the west or right bank are the Gābur Basra, Buri Basra and Bania rivers and on the east or left bank, the Nimti jhora and Paror. The Dima is a sizable stream rising in the lower Bhutān hills near Buxā and flowing south to its confluence with the Alaikuri. Its important tributaries are, the Gram on the right or west bank, and the Doria on the left or east bank.

Kālajāni

Alaikuri

Dima

The Rāidāk rises close to mount Chomolhāri in Tibet. It flows southwards till it enters the Koch Bihār district. In its northern course through the Jalpāiguri district it forms a large island by throwing off a branch stream called the Maināgāon *nadī*, which leaves the Rāidāk at the point where it enters the district and joins it again about ten miles lower down. The old course of

Rāidāk

the river forms the boundary between Ālipur Duār and Bhalka, but in 1905 the river came down in high flood and deserted its former bed which lies to the east of the Rāidāk Tea Garden; it swept across the country and poured its waters into many small streams to the west of its former course, one of which, the Dharlā jhora, is now the main stream and runs to the west of the Rāidāk Tea Garden. In 1930, it left its old bed and moved east near Teamari. In 1933, it broke through the forests at Newlands on the east and at Chipra on the west.

Sankosh

The right bank of the Sankosh forms the boundary of the district with Assam. The Glentani is its principal tributary on the right or west bank. The Sankosh moved eastward in 1930, and during 1934-35 it eroded some portions of the Bhalka reserve forest.

Jaldhākā

The Jaldhākā originates from the Bitang lake area in Sikkim at an altitude of 4,420 metres (14,500') and flows through Sikkim, Bhutān, West Bengal and Bānglādesh where it ultimately falls into the Brahmaputra. It is a wide river but shallow in comparison to its size and is fordable everywhere in winter. Its current is very rapid and it rises and falls suddenly. Its principal tributaries within the district are the Murti, a big stream, flowing down the Dalingkot mountains in the Dārjiling district, and the Dinah, another big stream, which rises in the Bhutān hills and falls into the Jaldhākā on its east bank. The Dinah frequently changes its course and does much harm to roads and cultivation. About 25 per cent of its total catchment is in the hilly areas and the rest is in the plains. Table 6 shows the catchment areas of the river and its important tributaries.

Springs

There is a mineral spring near Buxā, about three miles from Tashigāon¹ in which people take bath to cure themselves of skin diseases.

Floods

The district being situated in the Himālayan foothills, criss-crossed by Himālayan rivers, has always been liable to floods. The reasons for high floods are excessive rainfall of small duration on small catchments, continuous rainfall of several days on

¹ J. F. Gruning — *op. cit.* p. 11.

Table — 6

CATCHMENT AREAS OF THE JALDHAKA AND ITS
TRIBUTARIES : 1973¹

Name of river	Location	Catchment area		Calculated peak discharge (in cusecs)
		Sq. km.	Sq. miles	
Rāidāk (combined)	Bhutānghāt	4,660	1,800	4,67,600
Rāidāk I	From Bhutān- ghāt to Kālajāni confluence	665	257	64,190 (share of Rāidāk)
Rāidāk II	From Bhutān- ghāt to Sankosh confluence	175	68	26,048 (share of Rāidāk)
Sankosh	Up to Sankosh Tea estate	10,153	3,920	7,92,000

bigger catchments, the simultaneous melting of snow accumulated on high mountains and rainfall in lower reaches and sudden bursting of artificial water storages in hills caused by heavy land slides which block river channels. The rainfall is heavy, being of the order of about 350 cm. on the average in a year ranging between 100 cm. and 600 cm. Besides, the area lies in a seismic belt, and as a result, earthquakes loosen the hillsides in the upper region causing slides and slips of sedimentary rocks.

The catchment areas of the hilly streams were thickly wooded up to the beginning of the twentieth century as a result of which the surface was more or less undisturbed. With the increase in population and improvement of the communication system, there has been encroachment on forest land. There has been large scale deforestation, *jhum* cultivation on steep slopes, uncontrolled grazing of cattle, extraction of forest produce by dragging timber on slopes, causing aggravation of landslips and surface erosion:

The silts and debris, thus collected, are carried from hills and ultimately deposited in riverbeds in the plains. The gradual raising of the riverbeds have resulted in severe bank erosion and floods to the country-side. The river widens with the formation of many channels and shoals in the middle. The wiping away

¹ S. K. Roy — *op cit.* p. 3.

of high river bank causes overflow of banks even at low water level and thereby the water is diverted through the neighbouring deep water channel. The old course is then abandoned. Floods in the district are therefore caused by the very nature of the river system.

While the rivers flowing in gorges in the hills cause erosion of soil cover and landslips, in the plains the problem is more acute. There is erosion, sudden tearing away and inundation of valuable agricultural lands, tea gardens, villages, etc. The inundation leaves behind large deposits of coarse sand on agricultural lands rendering them unfit for cultivation for a long time, besides causing dislocation in the communication system.

We might recall that there had been a disastrous flood in 1787 when the Tistā, which used to flow into the Ganges, deserted its channel and emptied itself into the Brahmaputra through an ancient channel. Numerous deserted riverbeds in the district also bear testimony to the fact that the rivers had changed courses at ease often in consequence of heavy local rain in the hills. There had also been floods in the Tistā in 1881, 1892, 1902 and 1906.¹

Floods 1906

In 1902, the floods were confined to the Tistā basin, but in 1906 they covered the entire district. Heavy and continuous rain fell in July when Jalpāiguri recorded a rainfall of 40.05 inches. Rains were heavier in the hilly parts of the district. In previous years floods resulted from sudden downpours lasting a short time, but in 1906 there was continuous rainfall for days together. On the night of the 3rd August and the following morning the rivers and streams of the district rose simultaneously and there was great damage done to railways and roads.

Floods 1922-23
and 1948-54

The main feature of the flood in the Tistā in 1922-23 is that it devastated the Barnes Junction Railway station and the Barnes bāzār that year. Floods recurred in 1948, 1950, 1952 and 1954. In 1950, the Tistā changed its course to some extent and got merged into the Karatoyā through the Pānga-Jamunā river to the west. In 1954, land slides took place on a massive scale in the entire sub-Himālayan catchment after heavy rains and all the river basins were affected by the rapid rise of river bed and bank erosion. All the rivers in the district were in spate. The communication to and from the district town was cut off and Ālipur Duār town was also flooded.

¹ J. F. Gruning — *op. cit.* p. 74.

The floods of 1968 were caused by heavy rainfall between 2nd and 4th October. There were continuous and heavy showers which measured 44 inches or about 4,400 tons per acre. Land slides took place on a large scale in the entire Jaldhākā and Tistā basins and also the basins of the tributaries Lish, Gish and Chel. In the neighbouring Dārjiling district there had been 26 inches of rain on the 4th October. Rains had also fallen heavily on the Sikkim hills. The Tistā carried the waters of those upper areas to the Jalpāiguri district. Thus about 6,00,000 cusecs of water came down to this district at a speed of thirty miles per hour. The river also brought down silt, debris and huge logs of wood. The Sivok bridge near Siliguri parted with chunks of land on its sides and the Tistā widened up to 2,000 ft. The embankment at Kāthāmbāri gave way, and seven villages were washed away till the waters merged into the Chel river. The lower course of the Chel called the Dharlā began to swell and the waters again overtopped the embankment four miles to the north of Domohani and rushed to Maināguri to the south-west. The extra water of Dharlā swelled the lower course of the Tistā and by its impact the south-east embankment of Domohani gave way, and as a result human lives and cattle perished, the Domohani railway station and quarters crumbled and the waters rushed towards Maināguri. Waters from different courses were joined near the R.C.C. Railway bridge on the Maināguri-Lātāguri road. The bridge was washed away. The waters separated, one course merging with the Jarda river to the east, washing away on the way the two sides of a bridge situated three miles to the south, on the road leading to Jalpeśvar temple. Another course merged with the Keyā river via Barnes on the south. This course flooded Meklīganj in Koch Bihār district after traversing Jorpākūri, Bakali and Padamati.

The west embankment of the Tistā on the other side of Domohani gave way at a number of places and the waters rushed to the south entering Jalpāiguri town at 2 O'clock on the night of the 4th October. The bridge on the Karalā in the town crumbled, and the waters proceeded to the south-west till through Gadādhār, Pānga and Jamunā rivers it merged with the Karatoyā river. The Tistā reached up to Jalpāiguri-Haldibāri railway line after cutting its course overland at Maṇḍalghāt. Numerous lives were lost.

In 1969, the southern suburbs of Jalpāiguri town were submerged under Tistā flood-water. A railway bridge collapsed,

Floods 1968

Floods 1969

and the land between Kadobāri and Maṇḍalghāt was littered with innumerable head of cattle.

Floods 1972

The entire Jalpāiguri town was under water varying between 1.5 and 2.0 metres in depth for a period of 34 hours on 28-29 July 1972. Maināguri town was also flooded by the onrush of water from the Dharlā river from the west which had overtopped the National highway between Maināguri and Lātāguri, and from the Jaldhākā river to the east, the waters of which overtopped the Maināguri-Ramenī road. There was also drainage congestion for about two days in Ālipur Duār town owing to blocking of the drainage sluices falling into the Kālajāni which had risen above the level of the town.

To control the floods steps have already been taken and the North Bengal Flood Control Commission with senior Engineers as members has been formed to tackle the problem. The extracts from an article on "Jalpaiguri Town Protective Works" appearing in Appendix A highlight the problem and its solution. As to flood control and irrigation measures up to March 1973, 66 flood control, 1 medium irrigation and 9 minor irrigation schemes have been completed during the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Five-year Plan periods. Flood control schemes numbering 19 were in progress during the last year of the 4th Plan (1973-74). The yearwise expenditure incurred for execution of flood control work during the first four years of the 4th Plan period are as follows (in lakhs): Rs. 10.51 in 1969-70; Rs. 27.51 in 1970-71; Rs. 84.73 in 1971-72 and Rs. 158.00 in 1972-73. The figures exclude expenditures for normal maintenance and emergency damage repairs which would approximately be Rs. 2 crores during the said years. According to a report of 1975-76, the Commission has taken up 33 flood control schemes at an estimated cost of Rs. 4,55,21,000. These schemes would protect an area of about 458.56 sq. miles, Jalpāiguri town and its neighbourhood and Māl.¹

Tistā Guns

There is a peculiar phenomenon, locally called the 'Tista Guns', connected with both the Tistā and the Torsā rivers. Some say it has stopped recently. In rainy weather, specially during May and June, the said Tistā Guns, that is, some loud booming reports originate from the river beds and occur with frequency, usually in rounds of two or three. The sound is like cannon

¹ Government of West Bengal, Information and Public Relations Office, Jalpāiguri — *Biśdaphā Karmasāhī Rupāyaṇe Jalpāiguri* (in Bengali), 1976, p. 7.

reports. The said reports were heard in 1924 and also in 1952. The reasons for the origin of the sound have not yet been found.¹ A folk tale on this subject is given in Appendix B.

Jalpāiguri district is almost entirely covered with alluvium, except that a narrow belt of hard rocks is exposed along the northern border of the district. The geological formations found in the district are given below in the order of increasing antiquity. Geological
antiquity

Recent and Sub-Recent	: Alluvium and other soils. Boulder and pebble beds
Miocene (Siwāliks)	: Sandstones with clay and lignite
Permian (Lower Gondwana)	: Sandstone and shale with lenses of graphitic coal
Pre-Cambrian (Buxā Series)	: Slate, schist, phyllite, quartzite, dolomite, banded ferruginous rocks
Archaeans (Daling and Dārjiling Series)	: Gneiss, schist, slate and quartzite

Archaeans: Gneiss is exposed only in a small area near Jalpāiguri-Bhutān border north of Chimitonga. The Daling Series, which is well developed in the Sinchulā Hills area and in the northern part of the Buxā Hills Reserved Forest, is mainly represented by slate, schist and quartzite, dipping at high angles varying from 30° to 70° towards north-west.

Pre-Cambrian: The Buxā Series comprising slate, phyllite, quartzite, banded hematite-quartzite, dolomite, and quartz-mica-graphite-schist, occurs in Buxā Duārs and in places along the northern border between Torsā river and Rehti *nadi*. Next to alluvium Buxā Series is the most widespread geological formation in the district. The Chachkam *hīl*, which shows quartzite with ripple marks, contains hematite-quartzite on its north-west flank. Banded hematite-quartzites found near Gaopata on the hills north-east of Raimatong, locally give rise to hematite ores. The most prominent and, economically considered, the most important

¹ A. Mitra — Census 1951: West Bengal; *District Handbooks: Jalpāiguri*, p. XII.

member of the series, is a magnificent band of dolomite, which is traceable for some kilometres east of Buxā, the rocks above and below it being comparatively soft slates. The dolomite is very massive as a rule, but not infrequently it is shaly. It has a saccharoid, i.e. granular texture and light grey colour, but the impure shaly parts are darker; there is an exceptional variety which is finely granular and almost pure white.

Permian: A thin band of quartzitic and gritty sandstone with intercalations of slaty shale, carbonaceous shale and thin lenses of graphitic coal containing pebbles of quartz and quartzite, constitutes the Gondwana formation in the western part of the Buxā Duārs, while carbonaceous shale and quartzitic sandstone with extremely thin laminations of graphitic coal occur in the Titi Reserved Forest and at Lankāpārā.

Miocene: The Miocene rocks comprising sandstone and clay appear a few kilometres west of Alalkuri *nadi* and are thence found continuously as far east as the Jangri river valley. The sandstone is soft, dark-red, fine-grained, micaceous and often contains lignite, fossil-stems and intercalations of clay and pebbly and conglomeratic sandstone. The clays are mostly sandy and either mottled red or light green in colour.

Recent and Sub-Recent: Unstratified boulders and gravels, which represent the Sub-Recent deposits, are prominent close to the foothills, whereas sand beds are so towards the south. These deposits gradually become finer towards the south and eventually merge into the ordinary alluvium of the plains. Along the northern border of the district, sandy soil is mainly siliceous and aluminous. Alluvium is the most widespread geological formation in the area. It consists mainly of sands and silts brought from the north by rivers and streams. The commonest form of the alluvial soil in the area is a light sandy loam. Along the banks of the Tistā river, silty loam predominates. The fertility of these soils varies a great deal in different regions. It is recorded that soils, in general, all over the district are deficient in nitrogen and organic matter. The soils in the hilly areas are found to be suitable for the cultivation of tea.

Boulders and gravels of dolomite and quartzite abound in the beds of the hill streams and on the flood plains where they debouch in the Buxā Duārs and the adjoining area of the district. Quartzite boulders suitable for construction purposes have been reported in the Chamurchi, Dinah, Dima, Jayanti, Titi and Turturi rivers,

The average depth of water table, as observed in the dug wells located at Chaprāmāri, about 15 km. east of Siliguri, is about 6 metres. Test wells were drilled at Fātāpukur on Siliguri-Jalpāiguri road, about 1.6 km. east of Rājganj, where static water level was 5.7 metres below ground level, prior to the test. Test wells were also drilled at Mādhabdāngā, near Maināguri and at Bāgārbāri on Dalgāon-Fālākātā road, about 3 km. north-west of Fālākātā. Static water levels were 4.4 and 3.06 metres below ground level respectively, prior to the tests.

Ground-water

Some Gondwana rocks occur in the Jayanti region of the Jalpāiguri district, adjacent to Bhutān. The main band of Gondwana occurs in the Jayanti river section about 6 km. north-east of Jayanti town ($26^{\circ} 42' : 89^{\circ} 37'$). This band consisting of about 100 m. thick sandstone with graphitic coal, is squeezed in between Buxā dolomite and Daling quartzite. There is also another band about 7 km. long and with a maximum width of 400 m. in the Turturi river section. It is split into two as a result of a cross fault.¹

Coal

Physiography : The north-eastern part of the district forms the foothill belt of the Himālayas where the elevation gradually increases from the alluvial plain to about 2,000 m. and above towards the interior parts. The hills bordering the alluvial plain have gentle slope which becomes appreciably steep as the interior mountain ranges are approached where the terrain becomes extremely rough with ragged scarps.

Geological²
Formation

Previous work : The first published account of the geology of the district relates to the northern Himālayan tract and was given by Godwin Austen (1864)³ who investigated the occurrences of lignite and sandstone. Later in 1868, he reported the occurrence of 'fossil molar of an elephant' in sandstone of the Siwāliks from the Buxā region. A more comprehensive account of the geology of this district is given by Mallet (1875)⁴ who recognized a 'series of rocks, some thousand feet thick comprising

¹ *Memoirs of the Geological Survey of India : Coal Resources of India*, Vol. 88, Delhi, 1971, p. 103.

² Source : Director, West Bengal Circle, Geological Survey of India.

³ H. H. Godwin Austen — 'Geological notes on parts of North-west Himalayas' in *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society of London*, Vol. 20, pp. 383-87.

⁴ F. R. Mallet — 'Geology and mineral resources of Darjeeling district and Western Duars' in *Memoirs of the Geological Survey of India*, Vol. 2.

variegated slates, quartzite and dolomite' and had named them as the Buxā series after a place called Buxā Duārs. This rock-stratigraphic nomenclature has since been widely used and has come to stay in the geological literature. Later Lahiri (1941)¹ had worked in some detail and was able to classify the rock group into two stages, namely, the lower Sinchulā stage, consisting of quartzite and phyllites, and the upper Buxā stage comprising the dolomite. These works were followed by investigations by the officers of the Geological Survey of India in recent years whose main concern was to prepare a geological map of the hard rock terrain and assess the dolomite resources.

Geological
set-up

In conformity with the general geological setting in the Himālayan tract of North Bengal, the foothill belt comprises the Siwāliks in the south, separated from the impersistent Gondwanas by the Main Boundary Fault in the north. The Buxā group of rocks attain maximum thickness here, and is best developed in the whole of North Bengal. It follows the Gondwanas in the north, forming the southern flank of the Dalings, which becomes the prominent rock unit in Bhutān.

The stratigraphic succession has been worked out as follows:
Alluvium and hill-wash material with loose sandy soil, boulder and pebble bed.

Siwāliks

Coarse micaceous sub-greywacke with pellet of clay and lenses of lignite. Stratigraphically upper members are usually pebbly and relatively more feldspathic.....
..... Main Boundary Fault

Gondwanas

Crushed sandstone and carbonaceous shale with lamprephyres
..... Thrust

Buxās

Dolomite, earthquartzite with variegated phyllite, grey black pyriteous phyllite, epidiorites
..... Thrust

Dalings

Thick quartzite interbedded with grey phyllite and schist.

Siwāliks: The Siwāliks, composed essentially of sandstone, occur in the outer fringe of the foothills. They are delimited to the north by the Main Boundary Fault, and to the south by the

¹ A. Lahiri — 'Geology of Buxa Duars' in *Quarterly Journal of the Geological, Mineral, Metallurgical Society of India*, Vol. 13, No. 1.

alluvial plains. Therefore, the actual thickness of the Siwāliks is not known. However, the exposed width varies from 1.2 km. in the Jayanti to about 3.8 km. in the Chunābhāti khola section.

The Siwāliks consist of a lower horizon of fine to medium grained sandstone with a basal red claystone, and an upper pebbly member. The average exposed thickness of the basal claystone is about 15 m. Prominent exposures of pebbly sandstone are noticed in most of the river sections where lenses of lignite and fossil wood are frequent. The sandstone belongs to sub-greywacke and arkosic type, which contain occasional bands of silt and pellets of clay. The chief ingredients of the sandstone are sub-round to irregular quartz, and little feldspar. The matrix (inner formative part) is commonly sericitic and sometimes calcareous.

The Gondwanas: They are sandwiched between the Buxās in the north and the Siwāliks in the south, and thus make an important stratigraphic horizon. The exposed width of the Gondwanas varies from 2 m. in the Raimatong and Chunābhāti sections to about 15 m. in a tributary to the Jayanti river. In some sections the Gondwanas are totally absent, being cut off by the overlying Buxā thrust.

The Gondwanas are represented in this part by an extremely tectonised mass of carbonaceous shale, carbonaceous and micaceous flaggy sandstone, and of crushed and powdery coal.

The Buxās: The Gondwanas are followed to the north by the Buxās whose dominant units are the quartzite and dolomite. The quartzite is best developed in the Buxā Duārs area and farther to the west. It occurs in two distinct bands. The lower one overlies the thin basal phyllite, but generally overrides the Siwāliks along the Main Boundary Fault. The upper quartzite band is comparatively thicker, occupying the northern part, and corresponds to the Sinchulā stage of Lahiri (1941)¹. The dolomite is light to dark grey, showing composition bands. It is generally fine grained exhibiting sutured grain outline. Quartz is normally rare but is occasionally present in calcareous matrix.

The Dalings: They are represented by thin-bedded quartzite, phyllite and chlorite sericite schist, and are exposed as thin strips near the Indo-Bhutan border, north of Buxā Duārs.

Base-Metal: An occurrence of copper ore, about 0.8 km. west of Buxā Duārs, had been reported by Mallet (1875)², but a later

Mineral
Occurrences

¹ Loc. cit.

² Loc. cit.

worker could not locate the spot because of land-slide cover. Some disseminated chalcopyrite and malachite (green mineral) strains are noticed within phyllite and associated vein quartz near Gaopata.

Calcareous tufa: Deposits of tufa are seen in the neighbourhood of Jayanti. Such occurrences are also reported from Chuniā, Bajhe and Kāli.

Dolomite: This is the most important economic material in Jalpaiguri district. Detailed work has been carried out to assess the dolomite resources in this area. Nearly, 330 samples have been analysed. As mentioned earlier, the dolomite occurs within the Buxā sequence and two distinct bands have been delineated, of which the upper band is by far the most important one. This band has an approximate thickness of 380 m. and extends for about 11 km. strikewise. The lower band is 38 m. in thickness having 1.2 km. strike extension.

The reserve of dolomite is really vast. It will be apparent from the fact that within an area of nearly 5 sq. km. the total indicated reserve to a depth of 50 m. is about 243 million tonnes. At present, the Bengal Lime and Stone Co. and Jayanti Lime Co. are mining the dolomite mainly from the strewn boulder in the river bed. The chips are sent to the Hindusthan Steel at Durgāpur and are partly used for the production of lime locally.

LOCALITY¹
INDEX

	Latitude	Longitude
Buxā Duārs	26°45'	89°33'
Bajhe N	26°42'	89°37'
Chunābhāti	26°46'	89°35'
Chuniā N	26°42'	89°40'
Gaopata	26°46'	89°34'
Kāli N	26°43'	89°37'
Mahākāl	26°44'	89°36'
Raimatong	26°46'	89°30'
Sakhē	26°44'	89°44'

VEGETATION²

The climatic condition has influenced the vegetation. Heavy rains and hot summer days have made the climate damp and warm, favouring the growth of a wet and evergreen forest. Such

¹ Source: Director, West Bengal Circle, Geological Survey of India.

² cf. S. K. Mukerjee, 'A sketch of the vegetation of Jalpaiguri District of West Bengal' in *Bulletin of the Botanical Survey of India*, Vol. 7, Nos. 1-4, 1965, pp. 134-37.

forest is found only in small patches, while tropical semi-evergreen, moist *lāl*, riverine *khair-sissoo* and the savannah are the different types met with in the area. The growth of the savannah may be due to the changing courses of rivers, fire and desertion of cultivated lands. The silt deposits on the river beds nurture tall grasses followed by a few herbaceous and shrubby plants and scattered trees. These plants cover the waste land with a savannah type of vegetation. *Dalbergia sissoo* Roxb. and *Acacia catechu* Linn. gradually predominated and as associates of these two *Salmalia malabarica* Schott. & Endl., *Albizia procera* Bth., *Randia dumetorum* Lamk. and *Albizia odoratissima* Bth. established themselves. In such riverine forests, as the trees increased in number the grasses were eliminated and other deciduous species of trees grew up, e.g. *Wrightia tomentosa* Roem., *Dillenia pentagyna* Roxb., *Sterculia villosa* Roxb., *Terminalia crenulata* Roth, with *Shorea robusta* Gaertn., the king of timbers. But these savannahs fell preys repeatedly to fire which cleared the grounds for formation of fresh savannah. However, fire-resisting species, such as, *Shorea robusta* Gaertn., *Careya arborea* Roxb., *Dillenia pentagyna* Roxb., *Syzygium cerasoideum* (Roxb.) Raizada, *Salmalia malabarica* Schott. & Endl. and a few others gradually invade the savannahs and slowly establish themselves eliminating the grasses.

If fire protection is provided, this process is accelerated. Here the most characteristic of the invading trees *Macaranga denticulata* Muell. -Arg., *Trema orientalis* Wall. and *Callicarpa arborea* Roxb. appear simultaneously, and *Alpinia Allughas* Rosc. ---a tall herb of the *Zingiberaceae* spreads very rapidly.

Presence of sufficient moisture convert the deciduous forest to an evergreen by helping to establish such trees as *Amoora rohituka* W. & A., *A. spectabilis* Miq., etc. Shrubs like *Phlogacanthus thyrsiflorus* Nees, *Morinda angustifolia* Roxb., *Casearia vareca* Roxb., *Micromelum pubescens* Bl., *Coffea bengalensis* Roxb., different species of *Ixora*, *Clerodendron* and *Bridelia*, etc. with *Leea*, *Piper*, *Phyllanthus* and different species of Ferns form a dense undergrowth. Extensive climbers like *Spatholobus roxburghii* Bth., *Croton caudatus* Geisel., *Mucuna macrocarpa* Wall., *Milletia auriculata* Baker, *Mezoneurum cucullatum* W. & A., *Cissus*, *Smilax* and *Dioscorea* help to make the canopy more compact.

A special type of vegetation is met with in some places called *Convolvulus Mictium* and described as creeper jungle. A typical

Convolvulus Mictium has large trees scattered at wide distances with the entanglement of herbaceous or semiherbaceous creeper beneath. The *Convolvulus Mictium* is formed on lands cleared by burning or felling for cultivation and later abandoned, and the stability of their formation is ascribed to the aggressiveness of the climbers.

In addition to the canes found in creeper jungles there are cane brakes in the evergreen type of forests on the eastern parts of the district.

In damp surroundings a graceful palm forms small societies, and this is *Pinanga gracilis* Bl. which is frequently gregarious. Other palms growing wild are *Caryota urens* Linn. and *Phoenix sylvestris* Roxb., while *Areca catechu* Linn., is abundantly cultivated in villages and towns.

There are bamboo groves with *Dendrocalamus hamiltoni* Nees & Arn. as the common species. Bamboo groves are also found near villages where *Bambusa balcooa* Roxb., *B. tulda* and *B. vulgaris* are common.

Near villages many fruit trees are found in cultivation, e.g. *Mangifera indica* Linn., *Artocarpus heterophyllus* Lamk., *Syzygium cumini* (L.) Skeels, *S. jambos* (L.) Alston, *S. samarangensis* (Bl.) Merr. & Perr., *Annona squamosa* Linn., *A. reticulata* Linn., *Carica papaya* Linn., *Psidium guajava* Linn., *Litchi chinensis* Sonner., *Euphoria longan* Steudel, *Citrus grandis* Osbeck and other species of *Citrus*, *Limonia acidissima* Linn., *Spondias dulcis* Willd., *S. mangifera* Willd., and *Musa*. Other trees growing in and around villages, self-sown or in cultivated condition are different species of *Ficus*, *Moringa oleifera* Lam., *Anthocephalus cadamba* Miq., *Azadirachta indica* A. Juss., *Holarrhena antidy-senterica* Wall., *Erythrina stricta* Roxb., *Salmaalina malabarica* Schott. & Endl., *Artocarpus lakoocha* Roxb., *Saraca indica* Linn., *Tamarindus indica* Linn., etc. In the outskirts of the jungle and in village shrubberies grows a dangerous stinging plant, *Laportaea crenulata* Guad., a slight contact of the leaves of which with the skin produces a severe burning sensation and pain to the place of contact and this spreads rapidly to other parts of the body causing high fever and restlessness. This plant is more common in the eastern part of the district. On open grounds and on road-sides two other recently introduced plants, *Lantana aculeata* Linn., a thorny shrub with beautiful small yellow or red flowers and *Eupatorium odoratum*, a tall herb with purplish flowers, are replacing the indigenous shrubby and herbaceous weeds. An

obnoxious weed is gaining ground gradually and this is *Eryngium foetidum* Linn., an umbellifer. This has sharp and stiff spine-tipped leaves and dichotomous branches. *Cassia alata* Linn., a shrub with large pinnate (compound) leaves and beautiful yellow flowers is common near rail stations and also elsewhere in open places. This is a reputed medicinal plant.

Tea gardens occupy a large area of the district totalling about 1,33,696.5 acres, and form a characteristic feature of the vegetation. The uniform tea bushes, with their tops pruned to the same level have tall slender plants scattered in between, for imparting shade. Trees most commonly used for this purpose are *A. chinensis* Merr., *A. procera* Bth., *A. lebbek* Bth. and *A. moluccana* Miq., *Dalbergia assamica* Bth. is also used for the same purpose. An exotic shrub *Crotalaria anagyroides* H. B. & K. is often planted in tea gardens for enriching the soil. Along with this, *Cajanus Cajan* (L.) Mill. and *Teprosia candida* DC. are also grown. In some tea gardens Tung trees are in cultivation. These are mostly planted on the boundaries and also roads inside the gardens.

Among the cultivated field crops rice is the most important. Jute has of recent years become next in importance, and as in other districts of the State, two species are cultivated, viz. *Corchorus capsularis* Linn. and *C. olitorius* Linn. Then come potato and the betel vine. Maize is also cultivated on a large scale.

The district can boast of some good highways which link different parts to one another as well as to important towns in the adjoining district. As shade trees along these roads the following are generally found : *Samanea saman* (Jacq.) Merr., *Artocarpus heterophyllus* Lamk., *Alstonia scholaris* R. Br., *Sweetenia mahogini* Linn., *Ficus religiosa* Linn., *F. rumphii* Bl., *Dalbergia lanceolaria* Linn., *D. sissoo* Roxb., *Albizia procera* Bth., *A. lebbek* Bth., *Lagerstroemia speciosa* (L.) Spers., *Melia azedarach* Linn., *Azadirachta indica* A. Juss., *Syzygium cumini* (L.) Skeels, *Cassia siamea* Lam., *Delonix regia* Raf., *Kleinhovia hospita* Linn., *Pongamia pinnata* (L.) Merr., *Peltophorum pterocarpum* Back. ex K. H. and *Putranjiva roxburghii* Wall.

The soil in the district is more or less porous throughout and therefore waterlogged areas are almost absent. Only on the southern parts there are a few marshy places which do not dry up completely in summer. The common Hydrophytes on such places are : *Nymphaea stellata* Willd., *Jussiaea repens* Linn., *Ludwigia parviflora* Roxb., *Nymphoides cristatum* O. Ktz., *N.*

indicum O. Ktz., *Hydrolea zeylanica* (L.) Vahl., *Ipomoea aquatica* Forsk., *Limnophila heterophylla* Bth., *Hydrilla verticillata* Royle, *Ottelia alismoides* (L.) Spers., *Nemachandra alternifolia* Thw., *Monochoria hastaeifolia* (L.) Solms., *M. vaginalis* Presl. ex Kunth., *Pistia stratiotes* Linn., *Lemna paucicostata* Hegelm., *Sagittaria sagittifolia* Linn., *Alisma plantago* Linn., *Najas foveolata* A. Br., *Scirpus articulatus* Linn., *Eichornea crassipes* (Mart.) Solms., *Azolla pinnata* Linn., and *Marsilea quadrifida* Linn., *Eichornea crassipes* is often found on running water where the current is not strong. Submerged in shallow running water grows *Cryptocoryne retrospiralis* F. ex W., while *C. spiralis* Fischer is found on the edges.

Forest

The following table indicates the forest area of the district vis-a-vis the total geographical area during 1911-61.

Table — 7

FOREST AREA IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT: 1901-61¹
(in sq. km.)

	Total geographical area	Area under forests	Percentage of forests to geographical area	Per capita forest area in hectares
1911	6,617	1,803	29.24	0.27
1921	6,286	1,803	28.68	0.26
1931	6,229	1,803	28.95	0.24
1941	6,534	1,803	27.59	0.21
1951	6,079	1,823	29.99	0.20
1961	6,234	1,824	29.26	0.13

The *śāl* (*shorea robusta*) trees predominate the forests which have an average annual rainfall of 144". These and other trees cover an area of 4,35,000 acres comprising over one-fourth of the district. Hill forests cover six per cent of the entire forest area, the plains forests covering the rest. Before the conservancy of forests began in the mid-nineteenth century, *śāl* forests used to be gutted by fire annually which in the Baikunthapur forests completely eradicated softwood trees and dense herbaceous undergrowth.²

¹ Government of West Bengal, Forest Directorate — *West Bengal Forests : Centenary Commemoration Volume : 1964*, Calcutta, 1966, pp. 263, 269.

² A. B. Chowdhury, 'The Forests of Jalpaiguri District : Study in Composition' in *West Bengal Forest : Centenary Commemoration Volume : 1964*, Calcutta, 1966, p. 99.

The major part of these forests is now administered as reserved forests. The following table shows the areas under forest in the district in recent years.

Table — 8

AREAS UNDER FOREST IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT EXCLUDING
ALIPUR DUAR : 1969-70¹
(in acres)

	Baikunthapur	Jalpāiguri	Buxā
State forest			
Reserved	16,365	89,554	1,68,446
Protected	52,459	187	1,558
Unclassed	34	5,027	1,764
Private forest			
(Mostly in tea gardens)	5,890	Nil	4,908
Total	74,748	94,768	1,76,676

The forests can be broadly classed as moist tropical forests, *śāl* (*shorea robusta*) with associates like *schima wallichii*, *melastoma* *chamapa* and *chukrasia tabularis* being its economically most important component. The Lauraceous species on the other hand predominate in various associations with *lagerstroemia parviflora*, *terminalia crenulata*, *toona ciliata*, *amoora wallichii*, *amoora rohituka*, *duabanga sonneratioides*, *bischofia javanica*, *salmalia malabarica*, *dalbergia sissoo* and *acacia catechu*.

The *śāl* here is of the best quality in India. The percentage of *śāl* per unit area in the best forests in the Buxā Division is 60—75%, whereas in the Jalpāiguri Division it is 90%.

The forests are mainly of four types, namely, riverain, plains, hill and savannah. The striking feature of succession is that the riverain type merges with the mixed type and *śāl* forests. The plains forests have many distinct types, namely, scattered *śāl* and wet mixed forests, mature *śāl* forests, dry mixed type and wet mixed type.

Near the streams and moist pockets there occur a type of evergreen forests called North Bengal tropical evergreen forests, the typical trees of which are *aesculus assamica*, *eugenia formosa*,

¹ Central Bank of India, Siliguri, *Lead Bank Survey Report : Jalpaiguri District, 1972*, p. 8. Alipur Duār has been mixed up with Koch Bihār Division and so separate figures are not available.

dillenia indica, *echinocarpus sterculiaceus*, *castanopsis* species, *talauma hodgsoni*, *pinanga gracilis*, *artocarpus chaplasi* and *myristica* species.

The hill forests do not bear any pure crop and have very little economic use. Some species can be found sporadically, namely, *toona ciliata*, *castanopsis* species, *acrocarpus fraxinifolius*, *duabanga sonneratioides*, *ailanthus grandis*, *chukrasia tabularis* and *morus laevigata*.

Because of fire protection enforced in the nineteenth century, the savannah forests occupy smaller area than before. Common species of grasses occurring in the high and low level savannah are *saccharum* species, *erianthus* species, *imperata cylindrica*, *phragmites karka*, *arundo donax*, *narenga porphyrocoma* and *neyraudia reynaudiana*.¹

FAUNA

The Fauna is best seen in the Wild Life Sanctuaries located here.

Jaldāpārā Wild Life Sanctuary

Jaldāpārā Wild Life Sanctuary has a varied collection of wild life. It is situated in the Ālipur Duārs subdivision, the nearest railway station to approach it being Hāsimārā on the North-East Frontier Railway. The sanctuary constituted a part of the Buxā Forest Division at the time of its creation. Its total area is 10,474.40 hectares.

The sanctuary was made for preserving the famous Indian one-horned rhinoceros which inhabited the savannah forests. Now various other animals are also found there. In the early thirties, the fauna of the savannah forests of Chilāpātā and Malangi areas of Buxā reserves was facing extinction owing to the extension of tea gardens and the shrinkage of the grass lands. The Bengal Rhinoceros Preservation Act came into force in 1932 providing legal protection for the animal.

The sanctuary was declared a 'game sanctuary' in 1940 and the Jaldāpārā Game Sanctuary range was created in 1954 with headquarters at Jaldāpārā. The sanctuary which had been a part of the Buxā Forest Division at the time of its creation, came under the management of Koch Bihār Forest Division, when the latter was created in 1961. In 1959, the name was altered to Jaldāpārā Wild Life Sanctuary.

¹ A. B. Chowdhury — *op. cit.* pp. 99-102.

Apart from the one-horned rhinoceros, the sanctuary abounds in gaur, elephant, tiger, leopard, sambar, hog deer, barking deer, spotted deer, swamp deer, pig, sloth bear, cats of various species, and various kinds of reptiles, birds and fishes. Though it is very difficult to give the exact number of each species, the following table gives the approximate number of animals and birds in the sanctuary as on 1 June 1966.

Table — 9

WILD LIFE IN JALDAPARA WILD LIFE SANCTUARY IN
JALPAIGURI DISTRICT

Common name	Scientific name	No. of individuals
Rhinoceros	<i>Rhinoceros unicornis</i>	74
Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris tigris</i>	2
Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus</i>	3
Gaur (Indian Bison)	<i>Bos gaurus gaurus</i>	8
Swamp deer	<i>Cervus duvanceli</i>	3
Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolor niger</i>	20
Barking deer (Kakar)	<i>Muntiacus muntjak</i>	160
Spotted deer (Chital)	<i>Axis axis</i>	11
Hog deer	<i>Axis procinus</i>	116
Wild pig	<i>Sus scrofa cristatus</i>	119
Monkey	<i>Macaca spp.</i>	299
Hare	—	3
Squirrel	<i>Petaurista spp.</i>	19
Peacock	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	120
Jungle Fowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>	243
Wood cock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	12
Owl	<i>Bubo spp.</i>	6
Kingfisher	—	29
Hornbill	<i>Tockus spp.</i>	12
Pigeon	—	16
Dove	—	162
Parrot	—	73
Blue bird	—	6
Twitter	—	2

There are also many other mammals like civet (*Viverra zibetha*), jungle cat (*Felis chaus*), leopard cat (*Felis bengalensis*), fishing cat

(*Felis viverrina*), jackal (*canis aureus*), rabbit (*Lepus nigricollis ruficaudatus*), sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*), etc.

In 1963-64, 6 Gayals (*Bos spp.*) — 4 females and 2 males — were purchased and released among the wild gaur herd.

Birds

As to birds there are many other types besides those listed in the preceding tables. They are pie (*Dendrocitta spp.*), tit (*Parus spp.*), nuthatch (*Sitta spp.*), babbler (*Turdoides spp.*), slatyheaded scimitar babbler (*Pomatorhinus schisticeps*), iora (*Aegithina spp.*), redstart (*Phoenicurus spp.*), flycatcher (*Muscicapa spp.*), cuckoo-shrike (*Carocina spp.*), minivet (*Pericrocotus spp.*), drongo (*Dicrorus spp.*), tailor bird (*Orthotomus spp.*), wren warbler (*Prinia spp.*), oriole (*Oriolus spp.*), grackle (*Gracula spp.*), swallow (*Hirundo spp.*), wagtail (*Motacilla spp.*), barbet (*Megalaima spp.*), parakeet (*Psittacula spp.*), bee eater (*Merops spp.*), pied kingfisher (*Ceryle spp.*), horn-bill (*Tockus spp.*), hoopoe (*Upupa spp.*), nightjar (*Caprimulgus spp.*), owl (*Bubo spp.*), vulture (*Gyps spp.*), fishing eagle (*Haliastur spp.*), imperial pigeon, green pigeon (*Treron spp.*), dove (*Streptopelia spp.*), emerald dove (*Chalcophaps spp.*), pea fowl (*Pavo spp.*), quail (*Coturnix spp.*), black partridge (*Franccolinus spp.*), cormorant (*Phalacrocorax spp.*), cotton teal (*Nettapus spp.*), common teal (*Anas spp.*), grebe (*Podiceps spp.*), etc.

Reptiles

There are various kinds of snakes and lizards in the sanctuary. The snakes commonly found are the huge fangless python (*Python molurus*), the cobra (*Naja naja*), the king cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*), kraits (*Bungarus spp.*), vipers (*Vipera spp.*), cat snakes, common green whip snakes, Indian rat snakes, etc. The most common lizards are gecko (*Gecko verticillatus*), monitor (*Veranus spp.*), blood sucker, etc.

Gorumārā Wild Life Sanctuary

The Gorumārā Wild Life Sanctuary covers an area of 2,129 acres or 5.32 sq.km., the nearest railhead being Chālsā railway station on the North-East Frontier Railway. The sanctuary abounds in rhinoceros, elephant, tiger, bison, sambar, barking deer, hog deer, buffalo, pig fowl, etc. It has also the same kinds of other mammals and birds as are to be found in Jaldāpārā. It was declared a wild life sanctuary in 1949 and spreads over Lower Tandu, Upper Tandu and Daina forest ranges.

Chāprāmāri Wild Life Sanctuary

The Chāprāmāri Wild Life Sanctuary covers an area of 2,373 acres or 5.44 sq. km., the nearest railhead being Chālsā railway station. It also abounds in the same types of wild life as are found in the two other sanctuaries. It was declared a sanctuary in 1941 and it spreads over part of Upper Tandu forest range.

It may be recalled that in 1865 the Government Forest Act was passed by the Governor General of India in Council to provide for the management and preservation of Government forests. Rules were made under it in 1871 for better management and preservation of the Government forests in the lower provinces of Bengal. The Indian Forest Act came in force in 1878. In this act wild animals, skins, tusks, horns, bones and all other parts or produce of animals when found in or brought from a forest were considered to be forest produce. In Bengal, rules were framed in 1915 to regulate hunting, shooting and fishing within the reserved and protected forests within the compass of the Indian Forest Act, 1878. The rules prohibited hunting, shooting, trapping or fishing in forests meant to be wild life sanctuaries and thus the extinction of any species was guarded against. The rules also provided for permits for shooting, etc. in some forests in certain specified period of the year. GAME LAWS

The Elephant Preservation Act was passed in 1879 and Bengal amended this Act in 1932 by enacting the Elephant Preservation (Bengal Amendment) Act, 1932 to provide for destruction of elephants gone wild and thus endangering life and property. Bengal Rhinoceros Preservation Act was also passed in 1932. Thus the elephant and the rhinoceros were protected under the Acts of 1879 and 1932.

The climate of this district is similar to that of the districts in the plains to the south, but owing to its proximity to the hills, the rainfall is much heavier and the temperatures seldom excessive. The cold season is from mid-November to the end of February. This is followed by the hot season from March to May. The period from June to about the beginning of October is the south-west monsoon season. October to mid-November constitutes the post-monsoon season. CLIMATE

Records of rainfall are available for seven stations for periods ranging from 33 to 93 years. The details of the rainfall at these stations and for the district as a whole are given in tables 10 and 11. The average annual rainfall in the district is 3,925.1 mm. (154.53"). The rainfall generally increases from the south-west to the north-east. About 79% of the annual rainfall is received during the south-west monsoon season. In the latter half of the summer season and in October, the district gets some rainfall mostly as thundershowers. July is generally the rainiest month when the rainfall amounts to about a fifth of the annual total. Rainfall

The variation in the rainfall from year to year is not large. During the fifty year period, 1901 to 1950, the highest annual rainfall amounting to 147% of the normal occurred in 1921 while 1947 was the year with the lowest rainfall which was 58% of the normal. There were 3 years in this 50-year period when the rainfall was less than 80% of the normal, no two of them being consecutive. From table 11 it will be seen that the rainfall was between 3,400 and 4,400 mm. (133.86" and 173.23") in 35 years out of 50 in the district.

On an average there are 116 rainy days (i.e. days with rainfall of 2.5 mm. or more) in a year. This number varies from 101 at Fālākātā to 137 at Buxā.

The heaviest rainfall in 24 hours recorded at any station in the district was 538.5 mm. (21.20") in 1921, June 8 at Buxā.

Temperature

The only meteorological observatory in the district is at Jalpāiguri and the records of this station may be taken as representative of the meteorological conditions in the district. The cold season starts by the middle of November when temperatures begin to drop. January is the coldest month with the mean daily minimum temperature at 10.7°C (51.3°F) and the mean daily maximum temperature at 23.6°C (74.5°F). In association with cold spells in the wake of western disturbances moving eastwards, during January and February, night temperatures may drop to a couple of degrees above the freezing point of water and frosts may occur. Temperatures begin to rise by about the beginning of March; April and May are the hottest months. The mean daily maximum temperature in these months is 31.6°C (82.9°F) and the mean daily minimum temperature is 21.3°C (70.3°F). The maximum temperatures in summer may sometimes reach 39.0°C (102.2°F) or above. Even in the south-west monsoon, day temperatures continue to be as in summer and the night temperatures are higher than those in the summer season. With the withdrawal of the south-west monsoon in October, both day and night temperatures decrease and the weather gradually becomes cooler.

The highest maximum temperature recorded at Jalpāiguri was 40.0°C (104.0°F) in 1932, April 11. The lowest minimum temperature was 12.2°C (36.0°F) in 1905, February 3.

Humidity

The atmosphere is highly humid throughout the year. During the period from February to April, the afternoon relative humidities are comparatively lower, being only between 40 and 50%.

Cloudiness

In the monsoon season skies are heavily clouded or overcast. During the period from October to April, skies are generally clear

or lightly clouded. Cloudiness increases in May.

Winds are generally light, except for short spells during thunderstorms in the period from March to May, when they are stronger. Winds During the post-monsoon and winter months the direction of winds is variable. In the pre-monsoon months from March to May, winds blow mainly from north-easterly or easterly directions. In the monsoon months, the winds are mainly from directions between north-east and south.

Some of the cyclonic storms and depressions which originate in the Bay of Bengal in the south-west monsoon and post-monsoon seasons move in a northerly direction and affect the district causing widespread heavy rain. Thunderstorms occur all the year round, being least frequent in the winter. Thunderstorms during the months of April and May are occasionally associated with squall and hail. These thunderstorms are similar to the nor'westers of South Bengal and are sometimes violent. Fog occurs in the winter months. Special weather phenomena

Tables 12, 13 and 14 give the temperature and humidity, mean wind speed and frequency of special weather phenomena respectively for Jalpāiguri.



Table — 10

NORMALS AND EXTREMES OF RAINFALL

Station	No. of years of data	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Annual	Highest annual rainfall as % of normal & year**	Lowest annual rainfall as % of normal & year**	Heaviest rainfall in 24 hours*	
		Amount (mm)	Date	Amount (mm)	Date	Amount (mm)	Date	Amount (mm)	Date	Amount (mm)	Date	Amount (mm)	Date	Amount (mm)	Date	Amount (mm)	Date	
Jalpāiguri	50	a 6.9	17.0	33.3	113.3	302.3	683.8	773.9	658.9	560.6	150.1	14.2	4.3	3319.1	129	66	403.3	1892 Jul 8
	b	0.6	1.5	2.3	6.2	13.4	19.5	22.0	20.7	17.2	5.9	0.8	0.4	110.5	(1938)	(1908)		
Ālipur Duar	50	a 8.4	21.1	43.9	144.0	423.9	851.4	816.9	649.7	643.6	177.8	12.5	3.3	3796.5	155	72	378.5	1954 Jul 24
	b	0.7	1.8	2.8	7.5	15.2	17.8	19.7	17.9	16.2	6.1	0.8	0.4	108.9	(1848)	(1933)		
Fālākātā	50	a 7.9	18.0	35.3	113.0	340.4	675.6	718.8	580.9	485.1	126.5	13.2	5.8	3120.5	165	57	383.3	1837 Sep 4
	b	0.6	1.4	2.3	6.3	14.1	18.3	18.8	17.8	15.2	4.9	0.7	0.4	100.8	(1921)	(1908)		
Buxā	50	a 19.3	35.8	70.6	219.5	514.9	1106.9	1209.8	1067.6	789.4	239.3	35.8	14.2	5323.1	243	62	538.5	1921 Jun 8
	b	1.7	2.9	4.1	10.0	17.0	22.1	23.8	22.7	19.9	9.0	2.6	1.2	137.0	(1921)	(1930)		
Kālcini	50	a 12.5	24.1	48.0	161.8	412.5	804.2	886.2	745.0	582.4	162.1	19.3	7.4	3865.5	127	74	354.1	1901 Jul 20
	b	1.1	2.3	3.3	8.9	16.3	21.5	22.4	21.0	17.2	7.0	1.5	0.6	123.1	(1921)	(1912)		
Kumārgrām	45	a 16.3	21.8	65.3	188.2	487.4	954.5	942.9	730.0	622.5	188.5	19.8	5.6	4242.8	134	66	381.0	1935 Jun 5
	b	0.8	1.6	2.6	7.8	15.0	18.5	18.4	16.7	14.8	6.0	1.0	0.3	103.5	(1916)	(1942)		
Nāgrākātā	23	a 12.7	24.9	49.5	143.8	380.5	729.5	926.9	749.5	587.3	181.4	15.7	7.6	3879.3	135	62	399.8	1906 Aug 4
	b	1.4	2.5	3.6	8.2	15.8	21.9	24.7	22.7	18.1	7.7	1.3	0.9	128.8	(1906)	(1901)		
Jalpāiguri (Dist.)	a	12.0	23.2	49.4	154.9	408.8	829.4	896.5	740.2	610.1	175.1	18.6	6.9	3925.1	147	58		
	b	1.0	2.0	3.0	7.8	15.3	20.2	21.4	19.9	16.9	6.7	1.2	0.6	116.0	(1921)	(1947)		

(a) Normal rainfall in mm. (b) Average number of rainy days (days with rain of 2.5 mm or more). *Based on all available data up to 1955.

**Years given in brackets.

Table — 11

FREQUENCY OF ANNUAL RAINFALL IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT
(Date 1901-1950)

Range in mm.	No. of years	Range in mm.	No. of years
2201 — 2400	1	4001 — 4200	3
2401 — 2600	0	4201 — 4400	7
2601 — 2800	0	4401 — 4600	3
2801 — 3000	0	4601 — 4800	2
3001 — 3200	5	4801 — 5000	2
3201 — 3400	1	5001 — 5200	0
3401 — 3600	5	5201 — 5400	0
3601 — 3800	9	5401 — 5600	0
3801 — 4000	11	5601 — 5800	1

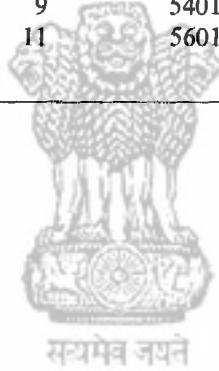


Table — 12

NORMALS OF TEMPERATURE AND RELATIVE HUMIDITY
(JALPAIGURI)

Month	Mean Daily Maximum Temperature °C	Mean Daily Minimum Temperature °C	Highest Maximum ever recorded °C	Date	Lowest Minimum ever recorded °C	Date	Relative Humidity* 0830 1730 % %
January	23.6	10.7	28.9	1931 Jan. 3	5.0	1937 Jan. 14	86 57
February	25.0	12.2	31.1	1931 Feb. 28	2.2	1905 Feb. 3	80 50
March	29.5	15.8	36.1	1945 Mar. 29	7.8	1906 Mar. 1	70 43
April	31.7	20.1	40.0	1932 Apr. 11	10.6	1905 Apr. 2	71 52
May	31.5	22.6	39.4	1899 May 9	16.1	1910 May 1	79 69
June	31.3	24.3	37.2	1927 Jun. 2	17.2	1957 Jun. 18	86 79
July	31.4	25.2	37.2	1933 Jul. 31	22.2	1949 Jul. 2	87 81
August	31.4	25.1	37.2	1933 Aug. 9	21.1	1918 Aug. 26	87 81
September	31.1	24.3	36.1	1933 Sep. 19	21.1	1944 Sep. 24	87 80
October	30.4	21.3	35.6	1926 Oct. 1	15.6	1947 Oct. 29	83 70
November	27.9	16.0	33.3	1952 Nov. 2	9.4	1914 Nov. 25	80 65
December	24.9	11.8	30.0	1951 Dec. 13	5.6	1918 Dec. 18	84 62
Annual	29.1	19.1					82 66

* Hours I.S.T.

Table — 13

MEAN WIND SPEED IN Km./hr.
(JALPAIGURI)

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Annual
1.8	2.4	3.5	4.7	4.8	4.2	3.9	3.4	2.9	2.4	1.9	1.6	3.1	

Table — 14

SPECIAL WEATHER PHENOMENA
(JALPAIGURI)

Mean No. of days with	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Annual
Thunder	0.5	0.9	2.3	7.5	8.9	8.7	8.1	8.0	7.7	1.2	0.2	0.2	54.2
Hail	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8
Dust-storm	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6
Squall	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Fog	1.6	2.2	0.1	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.6	5.8

APPENDIX — A¹

Jalpāiguri Town Protective Works

Jalpāiguri town, the district and divisional headquarters of Jalpāiguri, is situated on the west bank of the river Tistā. The river Karalā, one of the tributaries of the Tistā, flows through the heart of the Jalpāiguri town bifurcating it into two parts. The value of buildings in the town would exceed about 4 crores of rupees of which about 25 per cent would be the value of Government buildings alone. It has got special economic significance, being the headquarters of most Tea industry concerns. The Jalpāiguri town has to face the following threats from the rivers — (i) erosion and flooding by the river Tistā from the eastern side and (ii) flood aggravating river Karalā and its tributaries.

THREAT NO. (I) : After construction of the Jalpāiguri town protective works in 1955 the question of erosion and flooding direct from the river Tistā under normal circumstances has been solved.

THREAT NO. (II) : This has not yet been tackled and still exists and is being aggravated with the passage of time owing to rapid siltation of the bed of Tistā.

The river Karalā is one of the tributaries of the river Tistā on its right bank. It flows through a riverine length of 36 miles to have its ultimate outfall in the Tistā at Kings' ghat in Jalpāiguri town. The accumulated water of an area of 54.5 sq. miles drains into the river Tistā through this river.

With the passage of time, the condition in the upper catchment of the Tistā was so adversely changed that the bed of the river Tistā started rising alarmingly. The water level of the river Tistā at present remains almost above the general ground level of Jalpāiguri town during monsoon and hardly comes below the general level of Jalpāiguri town even during the dry season. This high level of the river Tistā at the outfall point of the river Karalā has greatly affected the normal discharging capability of the Karalā. The ruling level of the Tistā at the outfall point

¹ Extracts from S. K. Roy — 'Jalpāiguri Town Protective Works' in *Advanced Course on Flood Control, Drainage & Irrigation for Polytechnic Teachers*, June 1973, ed. Jalpāiguri Polytechnic Institute, Jalpāiguri.

being high, the discharge cannot make its way into the Tistā; on the contrary, it starts heading up submerging parts of Jalpāiguri town. This submergence increases alarmingly when the flood in the river Karalā synchronizes with the flood in the Tistā which is very common. The main town area gets submerged by about 8 ft. and the life and normal activities of the town become paralysed.

The matter was given due consideration since 1954 and several alternative proposals were thought of from time to time for tackling this problem. Broad outlines of these proposals were as follows:

(i) Shifting the present outfall of the river Karalā into the river Tistā further downstream towards Maṇḍalghāt along the Tistā bed for a length of about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Estimated cost Rs. 173.00 lakhs.

(ii) Shifting the present outfall of the river Karalā into the river Tistā further downstream towards Maṇḍalghāt for a length of $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles aligning between the bank and the Railway line. Estimated cost Rs. 227.00 lakhs.

(iii) Diversion of the upland discharge of the river Karalā into Tistā skirting the Jalpāiguri town and diversion of the lower part of Karalā into Gadādhār. Estimated cost Rs. 397.34 lakhs.

(iv) Diversion of the upland discharge of the river Karalā into Pānga above the Jalpāiguri town and diversion of the lower part of Karalā into Gadādhār. Estimated cost Rs. 303.38 lakhs.

(v) Diversion of the entire river Karalā into the river Pānga through the river Gadādhār aligning the first reach through the Tistā bed, by-passing the town area. Estimated cost Rs. 246.01 lakhs.

(vi) Diversion of the entire river Karalā into the river Pānga through the river Gadādhār aligning the first reach through the town. Estimated cost Rs. 265.64 lakhs.

Regarding proposal No. 1 :

The existing flood slope of the Tistā near Jalpāiguri town is approximately 2.6 ft./mile. The Karalā outfall may be shifted to some lower point in the Tistā by construction of a new channel with longitudinal slope of about 0.8 ft./mile. Thus with a properly designed outfall channel of length $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles the Karalā should be able to discharge its entire flow including the drainage

of the Jalpāiguri town most satisfactorily into the Tistā, irrespective of its flood levels. This is possible by construction of one fully armoured embankment segregating the Tistā and the Karalā. The back flow of Tistā into Karalā at $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles downstream will not affect the habitation in town area even during the highest recorded flood of Tistā. The alignment of segregating embankment would pass through the bed of Tistā for avoiding the built up area on the bank. The encroachment of about 1,000 ft. in the river will not affect its function as the average width of the river is about 12,000 ft. against requirement of 4,300 ft.

Regarding proposal No. 2 :

This proposal is almost the same in principle as that of No. 1. For avoiding the built up town areas the alignment of segregating embankment has been made through the bed for a length of 2 miles and the remaining length of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles passes through the country between the present bank and the Railway line.

Regarding proposal No. 3 :

The diversion of the upland discharge of the Karalā above Jalpāiguri town is possible. But the submergence of the town area cannot be avoided as the discharge of Dhardharā and Rukrukā, tributaries of the Karalā, having a catchment area of 10.3 sq. miles, i.e. about $\frac{1}{5}$ th of the total catchment entering the town area cannot be diverted above the town and the back flow of Tistā will inundate the town through the opening to be kept at the present outfall of Karalā. This scheme envisages a cut starting from the Rukrukā just below the Railway crossing near the northern boundary of the Engineering College Campus and connecting it to the river Karalā and then another cut from the river Karalā just above the Arabinda Colony of the town area finally joining the Tistā river about 4 miles downstream of the present outfall. The total length of this channel is 8 miles. The lowermost catchment area will be diverted by a lined channel to the Pānga through the Gadādhār. The present outfall of Karalā will be closed to prevent the backflow of Tistā submerging the town.

Regarding proposal No. 4 :

This proposal is about diverting the upland discharge of the Karalā into the adjoining valley of the Pānga by making a cut

of 4 miles instead of the channel to Tistā as in the previous proposal. The lower cut to Gadādhār is the same as that of proposal No. 3.

Regarding proposal No. 5 :

The entire river Karalā is proposed to be diverted to the river Pānga through the rivulet Gadādhār after crossing the Railway line. The rivulet Gadādhār having a small catchment of 4.15 sq. miles will have to be re-sectioned to accommodate the extra discharge of Karalā. Both the rivers being combined will ultimately fall into Pānga which flows down to Bānglādes̄h. The Pānga will have also to be widened to take this extra discharge. To avoid the built up area in the Jalpāiguri town the diversion channel of Karalā will pass through the bed of the river Tistā for a length of about 32 chains.

Regarding proposal No. 6 :

This scheme is similar to the proposal No. 5 except that the diversion channel will pass through the built up town area from the start, instead of aligning the first 32 chains through the river bed. The present outfall of Karalā will be closed.

PRESENT SCHEME

A Committee was appointed by the Government of India to go into the problem of flooding in Jalpāiguri town owing to Karalā floods. On 23 April 1971 all the members of the Committee inspected the last 3 miles stretch of the Karalā and the Tistā river from Railway bridge to Maṇḍalghāt. The Committee examined all the abovementioned 6 alternative schemes presented to them and opined in the interim report that the scheme No. one (estimated to cost Rs. 173 lakhs) contemplating a 4½-mile extension of Karalā channel within the Tistā, parallel and adjacent to its present right bank, with an outfall at Maṇḍalghāt is the cheapest and has the least number of human problems involved and could be executed quickly. The Chairman further highlighted that no other proposal except this can lower the sub-soil water in the Jalpāiguri town and that the other proposals divert the flood waters but not drain the sub-soil water. The Chairman of the Committee made the following suggestions for presenting a detailed scheme:

(i) To start with in the present condition the length of the outfall channel shall be 3,048 metres (10,000 ft.) which can be extended in the future as and when the gradual aggravation of Tistā affects the new mouth.

(ii) The section of the diversion channel shall be as follows:

(a) Bed width —	80 metre
(b) Full supply depth —	3 „
(c) Longitudinal slope —	
(i) Within new outfall	1 in 6,400
(ii) Within Karalā —	1 in 5,000
(d) Side slope of cutting	2 : 1
(e) Tistā side berm —	30 metre (about 100 ft.).
	(To be varied with a view to prevent piping or flowing of sand into the channel under flood conditions of Tista and no flood in Karalā.)
(f) Land side berm —	15 metre (50 ft.)
(g) F.D.L. at present	
Karalā outfall —	80.40 metre.

(iii) Connected drain — One metre deep and 4.57 metre wide — to drain out the stagnant water and put an end to the water hyacinth choking Karalā within the town limits.

(iv) At the exit the end is to be flared to a width of 140 metre keeping a total cross-sectional area enough to ensure that the total energy line is not effluxed.

(v) The crest width of the Tistā side embankment shall be 15 metres to utilize the excavated spoil as far as possible.

(vi) The river face of Tistā embankment shall be protected from erosion by protruding solid spurs and boulder pitching and aprons where wanted.

The Committee stated categorically in the interim report that the object of this scheme is to improve the outfall condition of a river like Tistā in its present condition. But the above layout, if well maintained, will render Jalpāiguri flooding very infrequent and of short duration.

On the basis of the above suggestions of the Committee a detailed scheme has been framed and estimate prepared.

APPENDIX — B

A folktale of the Tistā and the Tistā Gun in Jalpāiguri District*

The popular story is that the Tistā is a sacred river and personified as a living incarnation of the river goddess of the same name. Her decree is prophetic and materializes into action. The Dharlā, locally known as the Dhallā, is said to be the husband of the Tistā Buḍi and of another named the Mechi. It is about four and a half miles from the present Maināguri Railway Station. The Tistā Buḍi has one son and a daughter by her husband, the Dharlā. The name of the son is Karalā and of the daughter Dulāli. Dulāli is no longer a river. With the passage of time it has now been transformed into a big tank and is severed from her parents. On the western side of the Jalpāiguri station the Dulāli tank still exists in the suburb of Ādarpārā. The Karalā river divides the town into two halves as it passes right through the heart of the town. Mechi river is now dried up and only heaps of sand remain at its bottom. The point of her confluence with the Dharlā is now dried up by formation of land. It is said that the town of Jalpāiguri is visited with flood in the year the Tistā Buḍi wishes to meet her daughter, the Dulāli, when this tank (Dulāli) overflows and mixes with the Tistā. In the town or in the suburbs when famine and pestilence break out, the people go to the river bank for immolation of goats or for offerings on the bank to appease the angry goddess, Tistā who demands worship by groaning. This groaning is the sound of the Tistā Gun.

* Reproduced in substance from a manuscript account written by H. N. Mukherjee, a resident of Jalpāiguri.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY

The land and the people of the Jalpāiguri district have a long history which includes the history of part of Assam, the Koch Bihār and the Rangpur districts.

PRE-HISTORY AND PROTO-HISTORY

No tools and artefacts have so far been found in the district, which can be said to have been made by the pre-historic man. In the *Mahābhārata* (the historical basis of which goes back to the 10th century B.C., according to F. E. Pargiter, H. C. Ray Chaudhuri and L. D. Barnett)¹, there is the mention of a king named Bhagadatta. He was the king of Prāgyotisha or Western Assam. He joined the battle of Kurukshetra on the side of the Kauravas with his army of Chinese and Kirāta soldiers.² In the *Mahābhārata*, Bhagadatta has been described as a king of the *mlechchhas* or non-Hindu barbarians.³

It is difficult to know the extent of Bhagadatta's kingdom from the *Mahābhārata*. But from the *Sabhā-parvan* of *Mahābhārata*, it appears that the whole of the area to the north of river Lohit or Brahmaputra was within his domain and it also extended beyond. It also appears that he ruled over all *mlechchhas* of Kirāta origin.⁴ Kirāta is a generic name, given by the speakers of Indo-Aryan languages to speakers of Tibeto-Burman languages, belonging to Tibeto-Mongoloid races. These Tibeto-Burman speakers began to settle down in the southern foothills and slopes of the Himālayas from about the first millenium B.C.⁵ As Bhagadatta was supposed to have ruled over all Kirātas and as his kingdom contained tracts north of the Lohit it may be presumed that his kingdom extended up to the eastern Nepāl from the eastern borders of Assam, comprising the foothills and slopes of the Himālayas. Within this tract falls the modern district of Jalpāiguri. The Tibeto-Mongoloid Meches, supposed to be an off-shoot of the Tibeto-Burman speaking Boḍo group of tribes, can still claim to be one of the few autochthonous people of the district. Rājbanśīs, who are the other autoch-

¹ S. K. Chatterji — *Kirāta-Jana-Kriti*, Calcutta, 1951, p. 7.

² *Mahābhārata, Sabhā-parvan* 26, 9 and *Mahābhārata, V. 584*, quoted by

S. K. Chatterji — *op. cit.*, p. 20.

³ S. K. Chatterji — *op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁴ *Mahābhārata, Sabhā-parvan*, 30, 26-28, quoted by S. K. Chatterji — *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

⁵ S. K. Chatterji — *op. cit.*, p. 22.

thonous people of the district, appear to be Hinduized and Sanskritized Koches of the past. According to Prof. S. K. Chatterji, like Meches, Koches too were one of the Bodo tribes.¹

Except some stray references to the country named Prāgyotisha and to the Kirāta people in the *Rāmāyana*, *Harivamśa*, *Brahma-Brahmāṇḍapurāṇa*, *purāṇa*, *Vāyupurāṇa*, *Raghuvamśa*, *Bṛihat-saṁhitā*, *Yoginītantra* and the Greek work *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* of the first century A.D., we do not have any precise reference to the land and people of the modern district of Jalpāiguri, till about the seventh century A.D.

ANCIENT HISTORY

Badganga Rock inscription refers to Śrī Bhutivarman, an ancestor of Bhāskaravarman as performing an Aśvamedha sacrifice. The famous Nidhanpur grant of Bhāskaravarman informs us that Bhutivarman captured the whole of Kāmarūpa and had, a circle of feudatory rulers under him. As for North Bengal, we have no records of the Imperial Guptas after A.D. 543. We may assume that the conquest of Bhutivarman may have something to do with the fall of the dynasty in that region.² Bhutivarman's grandson, Sthitavarman, is described in the Nālandā seals as the performer of two horse-sacrifices, while the latter's son Susthitavarman takes the title of Mahārājādhirāja. He was defeated by later Gupta king Mahāsenagupta.³

Bhāskaravarman is the best known king of the dynasty which had been ruling in Kāmarūpa since the fourth century A.D. It is probable that the thirteenth and the last king of the dynasty, Bhāskaravarman, ruled over the whole of the Brahmaputra Valley in Assam and over considerable areas to the north of Bānglādesh and West Bengal. From the Nidhanpur copper plate issued as a land-grant deed by Bhāskaravarman from Karnasuvarṇa, Śaśāṅka's former capital, it appears that after the death of Śaśāṅka, Bhāskaravarman came down from the north of the Gaṅgā in West Bengal to the south.⁴ He was a contemporary of Harshavardhana of Kanauj and Śaśāṅka of Bengal. After the

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

² S. Chattopadhyaya — *Early History of North India*, 1958, p. 208.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁴ R. C. Majumdar et al. — *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Vol. III, *The Classical Age*, Bombay, 1962, p. 140. Some say that according to *She-Kia-fang-che* Harsha and Bhāskaravarman conjointly fought against Śaśāṅka and it is but natural to think that Bhāskaravarman occupied eastern part of Śaśāṅka's kingdom as a part of his joint victory. (*Vide* S. Chattopadhyaya, *op. cit.*, p. 250).

death of Śaśāṅka he might have annexed some parts of Śaśāṅka's kingdom to his own.

Bhāskaravarman appears to have been a sovereign ruler, for he, according to Bāṇabhatta, is reported to have said that he acknowledged the overlordship of none but Śiva.¹ Prof. S. K. Chatterji thinks that this seventh-century king of Kāmarūpa was a Kirāta or an Indo-Mongoloid.² If this presumption is correct, then it must be said that by the seventh century A.D., the Hinduization and Sanskritization of the leading sections of the Indo-Mongoloid people had already taken place, for otherwise Bhāskaravarman would not have declared himself to be a devotee of Śiva. Yet he was not a bigoted Purāṇic Hindu. He made real efforts to get the Chinese Buddhist traveller Yuan Chwang as a guest of his kingdom and retain him there.³ According to Yuan Chwang, Kāmarūpa included the whole of Assam valley and extended up to the Karatoyā river in the west.⁴ According to him the western and south-western part of the Kāmarūpa kingdom, roughly corresponding to present Jalpāiguri district, was inhabited by tribes of Mongoloid races.

In the ninth century the history of this district became a part of the history of the Pāla kings within whose domain Vaṅga and Vārendra were included. From there, the third Pāla king Devapāla (c. A.D. 810-50) set out on conquests. One of his raids of conquest took his brother Javapāla to Prāgjyotiṣa.⁵ The army's route perhaps lay through Rangpur and Goālparā districts. The king of Kāmarūpa or Prāgjyotiṣa accepted the suzerainty of Devapāla and was left unmolested. This king was probably Harjara or his father Pralambha.⁶ After the death of Devapāla the king of Kāmarūpa, Harjara asserted his independence.⁷

By the end of the tenth century a line of kings belonging to the dynasty called the Kambojas, dispossessed the Pālas of certain parts of their empire in Varendri in North Bengal and Dandabhukti in South Bengal. Historians are at a loss to say where they came from, the north-west or the north-east. If they had come from the north-east, it is probable that before being in Varendri, they had been in Kāmarūpa, that is Western Assam, Koch Bihār and eastern Jalpāiguri. The Kambojas might have been originally an Indo-Mongoloid tribe, speaking one of the

¹ *ibid.*, p. 139.

² S. K. Chatterji — *op. cit.*, p. 93.

³ R. C. Majumdar et al. — *op. cit.*, pp. 139-40.

⁴ R. C. Majumdar — *History of Ancient Bengal*, Calcutta, 1971, p. 112.

⁵ According to Kamauli Grant of Vaidyadeva, Prāgjyotiṣa was the name of a *bhukti* in which Kāmarūpa was a *maṇḍala* at that time.

⁶ R. C. Majumdar — *op. cit.*, p. 112.

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 123.

Tibeto-Burman languages, but they had become Saivite Hindus and had accepted Sanskrit as their court language, as is evident from the stone-pillar inscription of a Śiva temple at Bāngaḍh in Dinājpur in Bānglādesh.¹ It is apparent that successive waves of Kirātas or Indo-Mongoloids had become Sanskritized and Hinduized.

In the eighth decade of the eleventh century the Pālas were dispossessed of their kingdom in Varendri by the Kaivarta chief Divyok, but Rāmapāla was able to regain Varendri from Divyok's successor Bhima. Rāmapāla followed up his success in Varendri by conquering Kāmarūpa.

During the reign of Rāmapāla's son Kumārapāla, a feudatory king of Kāmarūpa, Tiṅgyadeva, rose in revolt. Kumārapāla sent his minister Vaidyadeva to put down the revolt and integrate the country within the Pāla empire. Prāgijyotisha became a *bhukti* of the Pāla empire and Kāmarūpa a *maṇḍala* within that *bhukti*, according to Kamauli copper-plate grant of Vaidyadeva. But after the death of Kumārapāla the *Uparika* or the Governor of the *bhukti*, Vaidyadeva, became an independent king. It is possible that the successors of Vaidyadeva could not maintain hegemony over the whole of Prāgijyotisha or its western part, Kāmarūpa for a long time.

According to *Kāmarūpa Buranji* (a chronicle of Assam Kings) a Buddhist monk named Jitari, who was revered by the Pāla king Mahīpāla (c. 978-1026), had established himself as a feudatory chief somewhere in the western Kāmarūpa.² It is presumed that his successors became independent of the hegemony of the successors of Vaidyadeva in western Kāmarūpa — the westernmost frontier of which ran along the Tistā-Karatoyā.³ The capital of western Kāmarūpa was probably Kāmtāpur, identified with Gosānimāri in Koch Bihār. The kingdom of eastern Kāmarūpa lay towards the east of Varendri in Assam where the Ahoms later established their hegemony.

The hegemony of the Kānteśvar kings over western Kāmarūpa was by no means complete. There were independent, semi-independent and feudatory tribal chieftains within Kāmarūpa. This can be gleaned from the account of Muhammad Bakhtyār

¹ R. C. Majumdar — *op. cit.*, p. 126.

² Khan Chaudhury Amanatullah Ahmed — *Koch-Bihār Itihās, Vol. I, Koch-Bihār, 1936, p. 20.*

³ The King of Assam, perhaps Vaidyadeva or his successor, might have invaded the newly founded dominion of the Senas and was driven away (*vide* R. C. Majumdar — *History of Ancient Bengal, Calcutta, 1971, p. 226*).

Khalji's expedition to Tibet left by Minhāj-i-Sirāj in his *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri*. These feudatory chiefs and kings were known as the Bhuinyās.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD

After the conquest of Rāḍha and Varendri Muhammad Bakhtyār Khalji set out on his expedition to Tibet, from Devikot in Dinājpur district, towards the close of the winter of A.D. 1206. The army marched in a north-easterly direction till it reached the neighbourhood of Bardhankot (in Rangpur district) on the west bank of the Bāgmati river, identified with the Karatoyā-Tistā by Blochmann. On the other side of the river lay the territory of the king of Kāmarūpa. The army did not cross the river but started moving north through jungle tracts. For ten days the army marched through the jungle, till it reached the hills. These jungles were inhabited by three Mongoloid tribes the Koch, the Mech and the Tharu or Tiharu. Before Bakhtyār had set out on these expeditions he had captured a Mech chief and converted him to Islam. This Mech chief who later came to be known as 'Ali the Mech', led Bakhtyār's army through the submontane region. On the eleventh day from their start from Bardhankot, the troops crossed the Tistā and reached the extreme north point of the territory of the Rājā of Kāmarūpa. Since the Rājā had to suffer an invasion of Lakshmanasena, whom Bakhtyār subsequently defeated at Nadiā, the Rājā was apparently friendly towards Bakhtyār. Bakhtyār's route back from the perilous campaign also lay through the same territory.¹ As is quite evident, the greater part of Bakhtyār's route, along the Karatoyā-Tistā till he reached the hills, lay through the present district of Jalpāiguri.

At the end of the thirteenth century, a feudatory chief named Durlabhnārāyaṇ became supreme in Kāmarūpa and began to rule over the tract lying between the Karatoyā in the west and the Barnadi in the south and modern Kāmrup district in the east. According to *Rudrasinha's Buranji*, Durlabhnārāyaṇ had brought a number of Brāhmaṇas and Kāyastha's from the Gangetic plains and settled them with rent-free lands. All of them were settled either in the present Koch Bihār district or in the Brahmaputra valley.

Among the kāyasthas Durlabhnārāyaṇ had settled there was a person named Chaṇḍibar living in a village named Pemāguri

¹ Jadunath Sarkar (ed.) — *History of Bengal, Vol. II*, Dacca, 1948, pp. 9-11.

in the present Kām̐rūp district (according to others at Baradoya in the present Nawgong district). In this lineage was born the great Vaiṣṇava poet Saṁkaradeva in 1449.

Durlabhnārāyaṇ's line could not continue their rule over Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa. They were uprooted by the Dhvaja kings. Nīladvaja was followed by Chakradhvaja. Chakradhvaja was succeeded by Nīlāmbar. Nīlāmbar is said to have constructed several roads from the capital at Kāmtāpur-Gosānimāri in the present Koch Bihār district; one of these was the road from the capital to the temple of Jalpeśvar Śiva at Maynāguri police station area.

Ghiyāsuddin Āzam Shāh (A.D. 1389-1409), the Illyās Shāhi king of Gauḍa, invaded Kāmarūpa. The Rājā of Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa forged an alliance with his erstwhile enemy the Ahom King and put up resistance. As a result Ghiyāsuddin Āzam could not advance beyond the Tistā-Karatoyā and had to return.¹

It seems that the kings of Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa had pushed ahead the borders of their kingdom beyond the Karatoyā by the middle of the fifteenth century. To recover the cis-Karatoyā regions from their hand Ruknuddin Barbak Shāh (1459-74) sent the valiant saint-knight of North Bengal, Shāh Ismāil Ghāzi, to war against Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa. Ismāil was defeated by the Rājā of Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa in a battle that took place near Santosh in Dinājpur district of Bāṅglādeśh. But Ismāil persuaded the Rājā to withdraw beyond the Karatoyā.²

In 1498, Alāuddin Husain Shāh (1493-1519) launched a vigorous campaign against Nīlāmbar, the king of Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa, to regain the territories the Sultans of Gauḍa had lost south of the Karatoyā. The war is popularly believed to have been instigated by Nīlāmbar's Brahmin minister, whose licentious son had been brutally murdered by the Rājā. Nīlāmbar had consolidated his conquests by constructing a military road from Kāmtāpur to his frontier fortress at Ghorāghāt. Ghorāghāt, in the present Dinājpur district, had previously been the frontier post of the sultanate of Gauḍa. After taking Ghorāghāt Husain Shāh marched straight to Kāmtāpur-Gosānimāri and besieged the capital. The city was fortified and the siege dragged on for a considerable period of time. At last Husain Shāh gained entry

¹ Jadunath Sarkar (ed.) — *op. cit.*, p. 118.

² Kām śvar was so powerfully impressed by the saintly character of Ismāil that he is reported to have surrendered himself and embraced Islam and that led to the persuasion of the Rājā to withdraw beyond the river. (*vide* J. N. Sarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 134).

into the inner citadel and captured Nīlāmbar. But the latter escaped. Kāmarūpa was annexed to the Gauḍa sultanate as far east as Hājo. A colony of Afghans was left in Kāmarūpa who dispossessed some of the Hindu zamindars and took over the civil and military administration.¹ Husain Shāh followed up his conquest of Kāmarūpa with a raid on the Ahom territory and achieved temporary success. But taking advantage of the monsoon, the Ahom army severely mauled the Bengal army and made it retreat from the Ahom territory.²

When the Dhvaja kings were ruling over Kāmarūpa, a chief named Haridās was ruling as a Maṇḍal on the north-eastern fringe of Kāmarūpa, in the territory bound by the Mānas river in the east, the Sankosh in the west, the Bhutān-Himālayas in the north and the Brahmaputra in the south. It is not certain which king he acknowledged as a feudatory or subordinate official,—the king of Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa or the king of the Ahoms. Haridās was most probably born in a Hinduized Koch family, if not a Mech family. He had two wives, Heerā and Jeerā. Heerā was the daughter of a Bhoṭ king named Hājo or Hājiā. Two sons were born to Haridās and Heerā. Śiśu was the elder and Viśu was the younger son. Haridās had his headquarters at a place called Chiknā. On attaining age, Haridās's son Viśu (later Viśvasimha) waged wars against the neighbouring feudatory Bhuinyās and annexed their territories. But he was clever enough not to antagonize the Ahom king.

When Husain Shāh attacked Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa and proceeded against the Ahom King, Viśvasimha did not rally to the side of either the king of Kāmarūpa or the Ahom King. He was, therefore, spared. He acknowledged the suzerainty of the Sultan of Gauḍa and crowned himself as the Kāmtēśvar King of Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa, with the former's approval.

In 1529, Nāsiruddīn Ābul Muzāffar Nusrat Shāh (1519-32) invaded the Ahom kingdom from his advanced post in Hājo, within the subordinate kingdom of Kāmarūpa. But Nusrat had to suffer a defeat. After Nusrat's death, the attack was renewed next year by a general of the Bengal army named Turbak.³

Viśvasimha now joined hands with the Ahom King and their combined forces defeated the Gauḍa army. Viśvasimha became

¹ *ibid.*, pp. 146-47.

² *ibid.*, *loc. cit.*

³ J. N. Sarkar — *op. cit.*, pp. 157-58. There is, however, no reference to the hostilities between Ahoms and the Muhammadans in the records of the Koch rule (*vide* E. Gait — *A History of Assam*, 1963, pp. 50-1).

the sovereign king of Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa. He then annexed extensive areas of the Gauḍa sultanate in the south, the Ahom kingdom in the east and Bhutān in the north of his kingdom.

For the civil and military administration of his kingdom Viśvasimha created several offices. He appointed his brother Śiśu, now renamed Śishyasimha, the *Rāi* or the *Rājā* of the frontier *Koṭ* at Śiliāguḍi or Śilikhāguḍi, identified with modern Śiliguri in Dārjiling district. The headquarters was later shifted to Baikunṭhapur to the north-north-west of the present town of Jalpāiguri. The Rāikats of Baikunṭhapur trace their lineage from Śishyasimha, the first Rāikat.

Viśvasimha married according to *Gandharva* rites¹, a term by which the Purāṇic Brāhmanical Hindus covered all marriages solemnized under non-Brāhmanical rites ; *Vaidic* and *Prājāpātya* forms were supposed to be proper *śāstric* Hindu forms. But Viśvasimha held his coronation in accordance with proper *Vaidic* rites, where Brahmins presided and Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Śudras were present to formally acknowledge the sovereignty of the new king.² According to W. W. Hunter, Viśvasimha formally declared himself to be a Hindu, along with a large number of his civil and military officials, just before his coronation. Hunter's opinion is that it is through him that the Hinduization of the Koches began, which eventually led to their assumption of the caste-name Rājbanishi.

One of the officials who along with Viśvasimha became formally a Hindu, was his brother Śiśu. On becoming a Hindu Śiśu changed his name to Śishyasimha alias Śivakumār. Śivakumār was preferred because Viśvasimha and his followers were initiated to Śaivism by one Kolichandra Bhaṭṭāchārya.³ But even in the nineteenth century the Hindu status of the Rāikats of Baikunṭhapur was in question. In a case regarding the rights of an adopted son, which went up to the Privy Council, the latter held the view that there was no evidence that all Hindu customary laws were applicable to them.⁴

Viśvasimha died in *circa* A.D. 1533. Mahārāni Sudāmnī took her own life by climbing on the funeral pyre of her dead husband and became a *saṭī* and thus helped the family to lay a claim to being Kshatriyas.

¹ Khan Chowdhury Amanatullah Khan — *op. cit.*, p. 91

² *ibid.*, p. 87.

³ *ibid.*, p. 95.

⁴ *ibid.*, *loc. cit.*

Vaishṇava poets and preachers like Saṁkara, Mādhava and Dāmodardeva helped the process of Sanskritization and Hinduization of the Koches, Meches and other Tibeto-Mongoloid people, speaking different Tibeto-Burman languages at about the time of king Naranārāyaṇ. In 1533 or '34, Viśvasimha's son Naranārāyaṇ was crowned as the king of Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa. At his coronation his uncle the Rāikat of Baikunṭhapur, Śishyasimha held the ritual umbrella over his head. Naranārāyaṇ was a great conqueror. He extended the area of his kingdom by several wars. The western limit of the kingdom was extended beyond the Karatoyā and included all tracts to the east of the Mahānandā; in the south-west the frontier ran along Ghorāghāt in Rangpur district.¹

In 1587, Naranārāyaṇ's son Lakshmīnārāyaṇ ascended the throne of Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa. He was not as strong a king as his father. During his reign a collateral branch of the house declared independence and established a separate kingdom at East Kāmarūpa (Barpeta district of Assam). Lakshmīnārāyaṇ entered into an unequal alliance with the Mughals, after being defeated by them. He agreed to pay a *peskhus* of Rs. 1,00,000 to Sheikh Kamal, Jehangir's general who conquered Kāmarūpa.²

Prāṇnārāyaṇ who became the king of West Kāmarūpa in 1632, conquered East Kāmarūpa and refused to pay the *peskhus* to the Mughal *faujdār* any more.

After Aurangzeb became the Mughal emperor, he sent the Subahdar of *Subāh Bānglā*, Mīrjumilā Khān, to subdue the king of Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa. At the advance of the Mughal army, the king fled from the capital. But as soon as the Mughal army marched towards Assam the king came back and recaptured his capital. The next Subahdar of Bengal, Śaistha Khān, was about to march on Koch Bihār (previously described as Kāmarūpa, Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa or West Kāmarūpa) in 1664; Prāṇnārāyaṇ thought it better to stall the invasion by agreeing to pay a tribute or indemnity. Prāṇnārāyaṇ brought architects from Delhi to construct a new temple on the site of the old temple of Jalpeśvar Śiva. But he could not complete the construction during his life time. His son Mahārāj Modnārāyaṇ (1665-80) completed the construction of the temple and made a grant of 44 *jotes* or rent-free *devottar* for the maintenance of the Jalpeśvar temple.

¹ K. C. A. Khan — *op. cit.*, pp. 124-25.

² M. I. Borah tr. & ed. — *Bahārīstan-i-Ghaybi*, Vol. II, Gauhati, 1939, p. 234.

In 1680, Mahārāj Modnārāyaṇ died. As he had no son his younger brother Bāsudevnārāyaṇ ascended the throne. This was not to the liking of the Nazir (minister) Jajnanārāyaṇ. The latter enlisted the support of the Bhutānese and invaded Kāmtāpur. The supporters of Bāsudevnārāyaṇ appealed to the Rāikat brothers of Baikunṭhapur to come to their aid. With the advent of Rāikats Jagadeva and Bhujadeva with an army, the Bhutiās fled. But after the Rāikats went back, the Bhutiās reappeared with Jajnanārāyaṇ and began their depredations. Jajnanārāyaṇ captured the king, executed him and declared himself king. On hearing the news of the death of the king the Rāikats reassembled the remains of the royal army under their command and marched against Jajnanārāyaṇ and his Bhutānese army, routed them in a battle on the river Mansai, crowned Mahindranārāyaṇ, a direct descendant of Prāṇnārāyaṇ, as the king and went back to Baikunṭhapur after leaving an armed contingent at Kāmtāpur for keeping the peace.

Peace could not be established in Kāmtāpur. Central power was weak. Jajnanārāyaṇ, although humbled, was still there, spreading dissensions. Different officials at different places were acting almost independently. In such a situation came the Mughal invasion of 1685, led by the Naib Subahdar of Bengal, Bhavāni Das. Some of the governors of the southern *chāklās* of Kāmarūpa acknowledged the suzerainty of the Mughal Subahdar Ibrahim Khān by paying tributes and joined hands with the *faujdār* of Ghorāghāt. In such a situation the ministers and officials of Kāmarūpa again offered the post of Chatranazir to Jajnanārāyaṇ. This enraged the Rāikat brothers of Baikunṭhapur. In this situation the weak king Mahindranārāyaṇ died without leaving any successor. As a descendant of a collateral branch of the royal family Jajnanārāyaṇ declared himself the king. The Rāikats could not accept him as the king. War became inevitable. In the battle that followed, either in 1700 or in 1702, Rāikats Jagadeva, Bhujadeva and king Jajnanārāyaṇ were killed.

Rupnārāyaṇ a nephew of Jajnanārāyaṇ ascended the throne of Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa, henceforth known as Koch Bihār, in *circa* 1704. Santanārāyaṇ became his Chatranazir. With the accession to the throne began the quarrel with the Mughal *faujdārs* of Ghorāghāt and Rangpur. Rupnārāyaṇ and Santanārāyaṇ were bent upon recapturing the territories or *chāklās*, the governors of which had acceded to the Mughals when the Koch Bihār kingdom became weak. They were also bent upon

establishing their hegemony over Baikunṭhapur, which for all practical purposes became independent during the rule of Rāikats Jagadeva and Bhujadeva. There was a protracted war between the Rājā of Koch Bihār and the *faujdārs* of Rangpur and Ghorāghāt. At last a treaty was concluded in 1711. According to the terms of the treaty the *chāklās* of Karjinhat, Kakina and Fatehpur became part of the Mughal *Subāh* of Bengal, under the *faujdār* of Rangpur. The *faujdār* gave the *chāklās* of Bodā, Pātgrām and Purbabhāg in *ijara* to Chatranazir Santanārāyaṇ to be enjoyed by him and his descendants. What happened to Baikunṭhapur remained enigmatic. According to H. N. Choudhury¹, as a price of the *faujdār* of Tirhut's support to Santanārāyaṇ against the Rāikats, Baikunṭhapur *parganā* too was ceded to the Mughals. But subsequent events go against such an assumption. Baikunṭhapur, in all probability, became an independent territory under the rule of the Rāikats. In 1793 the *parganā* of Baikunṭhapur comprised an area of 450 square miles. It may be presumed that in the eighteenth century when Baikunṭhapur became independent of Koch Bihār, its eastern limit ran roughly along the Jaldhākā river, the western along the Mahānandā, the southern roughly along the present boundary of the Jalpāiguri district and the northern along the foothills of the Himālayas; that is, Baikunṭhapur was almost coterminous with the present Jalpāiguri Sadar subdivision. Ālipur Duārs subdivision comprising the Western Duārs, was within the kingdom of Western Kāmarūpa or Koch Bihār. This area was soon to become the bone of contention between Bhutān and Koch Bihār.

In 1714, Upendranārāyaṇ ascended the throne of Koch Bihār. He had no issue and adopted the son of his *dewān*, Dinanārāyaṇ. Dinanārāyaṇ's father Satyanārāyaṇ wanted the King to declare Dinanārāyaṇ as his successor. As the King did not agree to do that, Dinanārāyaṇ requested the Mughal *faujdār* of Rangpur, Syed Ahmed to help him to become the King. As the Mughals wanted a puppet on the throne of Koch Bihār, their army advanced to Kāmtāpur. Rājā Upendranārāyaṇ sought the help of the Devarāja of Bhutān. The Bhutānese army and the Koch army together gave the Mughals a fight in which the *faujdār* of Rangpur was defeated.

¹ H. N. Choudhury — *Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlement*, Cooch-Bihar (undated), p. 240.

Having come to the aid of the Rājā of Koch Bihār, the Bhutānese entrenched themselves in Western Duārs. For fear of renewed Mughal invasion the Rājā of Koch Bihār was reluctant to take steps against them.

Taking advantage of the weakening of the Koch Bihār kingdom, the Rāikats of Baikunṭhapur—who had already become independent—were trying to fish in troubled waters and to extend the bounds of their territory. The thirteenth Rāikat Dharmadeva (1713-26) had shifted his headquarters from Baikunṭhapur in the jungles to Jalpāiguri in the open, that is, near the borders of Koch Bihār kingdom.

In 1736 the fourteenth Rāikat Bhupdeva died, leaving behind two young sons Vikramadeva and Darpadeva. The absence of a strong Rāikat at the helm of affairs at Jalpāiguri in Baikunṭhapur, was inducement enough for the *faujdār* of Rangpur Saukat Jung to invade Baikunṭhapur and take the two brothers as captives to Rangpur. The invasion took place some time between 1736 and 1739. Baikunṭhapur was declared a Mughal *parganā* under the *faujdār* of Rangpur. The revenue of the *parganā* began to be deposited at the collectorate at Rangpur.¹

In 1752 or '53 the then *faujdār* of Rangpur Kāsim Ali led an army to subdue the rebellious chiefs of Baikunṭhapur, who had become independent in the meanwhile, taking advantage of Murshidābād's preoccupation elsewhere. Kāsim Ali took the two imprisoned descendants of the Rāikat family with him to Baikunṭhapur and after subduing the rebellious chiefs made Vikramadeva the Rāikat. After having spent the best seventeen years of his life in imprisonment Vikramadeva was in no mood to rebel against the suzerainty of Murshidābād.

After the death of Vikramadeva, Darpadeva (1758-93) became the Rāikat of Baikunṭhapur *parganā* in 1758. Never in his Rāikatship did he formally renounce the suzerainty of Murshidābād.

In 1765 the *Dewāni* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was conferred on the East India Company by Shah Alam, Emperor of Delhi. Shortly thereafter the Company entered into relations with Koch Bihār and Jalpāiguri. In 1774 the Rāikat of Batrīshāzari or Baikunṭhapur (more or less the present Sadar subdivision of

MODERN PERIOD

¹ Arun Bhushan Majumdar—'Unabimsa Śatābdir Baikunṭhapur' in *Jalpāiguri Jelā Satavārshiki Smārakgrantha* (in Bengali), 1869-1968, Jalpāiguri 1970, pp. 31-2.

Jalpāiguri) was Darpa Deva. He was confirmed in his possession by the Company but a revenue was assessed on his lands and he was placed on exactly the same footing as an ordinary zamindar. It is interesting to note that Darpadeva in a petition of remonstrance against the heavy revenue assessed on him, which he addressed in 1777 to the Collector of Rangpur, calls himself Rājā of Batriśhāzāri, and it seems he was popularly called Rājā. Baikunṭhapur was annexed by the Company in 1772. The zamindar was made to pay an annual tribute of Rs. 10,000 but after an inquiry was made into the resources of the country in 1774, the revenue payable was increased to Rs. 25,000, which was further increased to Rs. 30,000 in the following year. This was maintained in spite of the Rājā's energetic remonstrances.

Baikunṭhapur was infested by *sannyāsīs*, who ravaged the country in armed bands of several hundreds. In 1789 a large body occupied the Baikunṭhapur forest, whence they issued on their predatory excursions. The forest was composed of tree jungle interwoven with cane, and was impassable except by narrow paths known only to the dacoits. The Collector of Rangpur got together a force of 200 *barkandāzes* and held all the entrances to the forest. The *sannyāsīs* were at length starved out, and those who did not escape to Nepāl and Bhutān were captured and brought to trial. It is said that within 12 months 549 *sannyāsīs* were brought to trial in this and other parts of Rangpur district.

The effects of these energetic measures were soon seen in a great development of the country. Though all accounts tend to show that at the time of the Permanent Settlement the number of Muhammadans in the *parganā* was numerically of no account, yet Hamilton reports in 1809 that he found half of the population to be Muhammadans. The explanation is, that the Baikunṭhapur Rājā, after the settlement, brought in a large number of Muhammadan immigrants from Dinājpur to cultivate the waste lands, so that, in this part of the country, the population had more than doubled in twenty years.

An interesting link between Baikunṭhapur and the outer world is contained in a letter which came in 1783 from the Governor-General to convey the thanks of, and some presents from, the Emperor of China to the *iālukdār* of Batriśhāzāri (zamindar of Baikunṭhapur) for helping on some elephants which had been sent from the Rājā of Nepāl to the Emperor, and had passed through Baikunṭhapur.

The country west of the Tistā belonged to the Rājā of Baikunṭhapur who had in the second half of the 18th century

become quite powerful with the help of *sannyāsīs*. In January 1773 the Committee of Circuit of the East India Company considered that it was very necessary for the security of the districts of Dinājpur and Rangpur to engage and subdue the Rājā of Baikunthapur and accordingly on 20 January 1773 required of Capt. Stuart to proceed against the Rājā in the following language :

"As the Governor expresses a strong inclination to retrieve our Military reputation, as well as to punish as effectually as possible any set of armed Men, entering our Districts in so riotous a manner I am of Opinion that You shou'd not march directly to this Fort but that you shou'd proceed on the West Side of the Teestā, until you arrive at a place called Jolpaiguree which is on the skirts of the Bycuntpore District, I mean by this, that you shou'd endeavour by every means to stop their retreat to the Westward, they having come in from the Morung Hills, you must inform yourself of all their Motions for this purpose. Tho' my intelligences say, that You have no Enemy whatever to cope with, but these sinassies who are actually in the pay of the Bycuntpore Rajah against whom an Expedition is now on foot after the Reduction of Beyhar. I wou'd recommend Your being constantly on Your Guard against a Surprize The Sinassies having great confidence in their Numbers and having for some time past given it out that they are coming to this place."

Captain Stuart acted promptly, and on 3 February 1773 made the following report from his camp in Jalpāiguri to P.M. Dacres Esq., and the Gentlemen of the Committee of the Circuit :

"At two in the Afternoon I made a second march, and took possession in the name of the Honble Company, of Jellpyegaurie, the Fortress and Capital of the Bycuntpore Country, which the Rajah in the hight of his Consternation evacuated.

"I would do but little Justice to the Gentlemen and Soldiers under my Command, if I neglected to represent you, their Conduct on his Occasion : The Gentlemen gallant Behavior far exceeded what I can describe, and the Boldness of the Black Officers and Sepoys, Surpass'd my most sanguine Expectations :

"I have the Honor &c to remain &ca

"As I can gain no intelligence of the Enemies Route, nor of any strong Hold in Durrup Deows possession, when he can be supposed to make a stand ; I shall remain encamped in Jellpyegaurie till I receive your further Instructions, without I learn

some movement of the Enemies, that may render my Presence in the Field Necessary.

"The Bycuntpore Country is in a very high state of Cultivation, and appears to be one of the richest I have beheld. In order to forward as much as possible any future Military Operations that may be intended here, I am endeavoring to collect a Magozun (*sic*) of grain."

It is now necessary to relate how the present Ālipur Duārs subdivision became part of Jalpāiguri district. There was a territory between Koch Bihār in the south and the Himālayan ranges in the north known as Bengal Duārs. It was about 180 miles in length (east-west) and 20 to 30 miles in breadth. The possession of this area would make possible command of all the passes (*duār*) from the mountains to the plains. According to the Government of India this tract of country was inhabited by people who were closely allied with the people of Bengal and were expected to cooperate cordially with the British authorities. On 12 November 1864 the Government of India issued a proclamation permanently annexing the Bengal Duārs. There was some struggle with the neighbouring Himālayan kingdom in the north. This struggle came to an end on 11 November 1865 when a proclamation was made by the Government of India and it was laid down that the future boundary between the territories of the Queen of England and those of the neighbouring northern kingdom would be surveyed and marked off. The Western Duārs or Ālipur Duārs thus came into existence.

The district of Jalpāiguri as an administrative unit came into being on 1 January, 1869, by the amalgamation of the Western Duārs district with the Jalpāiguri subdivision of Rangpur (Notification of 8th December 1868). This subdivision had been formed in 1854 with headquarters at Sookanee and was called the Sookanee subdivision until the formation of a military cantonment at Jalpāiguri leading to the transfer of the headquarters and the alteration of the name.¹

Historically the most significant development after the formation of the district had been the growth of tea plantations and the tea industry in the district as detailed in Chapter V. Tea industry changed not only the landscape but also the demography and socio-economic pattern of the district considerably. The Western Duārs, which had been once a very thinly populated

¹ The account for the period 1765-1869 is a shortened version of the account given in A. Mitra's *Census 1951, District Handbooks, Jalpaiguri*, pp. i to v.

forest area, became dotted with inhabited villages, tea gardens and small factories.

A few months before the out-break of Mutiny at Barrackpur Cantonment, the East India Company decided to set up a Cantonment at Jalpāiguri and sent the 73rd Native Infantry and the 11th Irregular Cavalry to take up positions in the new Cantonment. The intention behind the establishment of the Cantonment was to safeguard the roads along the Bhutānese territories.

Mutiny, 1857

In the first week of November 1857, the British officers of the 11th Irregular Cavalry detected a plot and as a sepoy was intercepted, he loaded a musket and threatened to shoot. He then tried to escape by jumping into a river, but was captured, tried and sentenced to transportation for life. Others in the plot were also intercepted and dismissed from the service.¹

At the end of November, news reached Jalpāiguri that rebellious sepoys from Dacca Cantonment were coming towards Jalpāiguri. On getting the news Captain Curzon moved from Dārjiling to Jalpāiguri with 400 men to reinforce the cantonment, and a force was sent out from Jalpāiguri Cantonment to Mādārganj to intercept rebellious sepoys from Dacca Cantonment there. On watching the preparations, the Indian sepoys of the 11th Irregular Cavalry, decided to inform their comrades at Mādārganj about the troop movement and sent two messengers to Mādārganj. On hearing about the preparations the Dacca sepoys at Mādārganj decided to by-pass Jalpāiguri and enter Purniā. But on their way back the two cavalry men went out as messengers were captured and blown away from guns in the presence of their comrades.²

After the formation of Jalpāiguri district, with its headquarters at Jalpāiguri town and subdivisional headquarters at Ālīpur Duār, the district began to attract educated Hindu gentry from East Bengal districts. The administration needed clerks and lawyers. Once the clerks and lawyers came and settled down there, their needs attracted doctors and teachers. These people settled down in the town and invested their savings in building up houses and schools. Thus a process of urbanization set in. With the opening of tea gardens the urbanization process was further augmented.

The freedom movement in the district began as an urban middle class movement in which leadership in the beginning was

Freedom
Movement

¹ C. E. Buckland — *Bengal Under Lieutenant Governors*, vol. I, Calcutta, 1902, p. 129.

² *ibid.*, p. 131.

provided by lawyers, doctors and teachers. From the very beginning the students from these families were in the fore-front of all the movements.

The Swadeśī and Anti-partition movements of 1905-11 had their reverberations in this district. At Dinbāzār the propaganda for boycott of foreign goods led to the arrest of Durgadas Chakrabarty, Adyanath Misra and Ananda Biswas. In 1907, a septuagenarian pleader Durgacharan Sanyal was sentenced to four years' prison term for assulting two English officials. In the same year in the wake of the movement for the boycott of Government' schools, the middle class Hindu gentry of Jalpāiguri town established a National School. In the meanwhile some of these gentlemen decided to open a Swadeśī textile mill at Jalpāiguri town. For that purpose they sent Jajneswar Sanyal to Japan for training in textile technology. He went and came back with training. From Madras some weavers were brought. But as the mill was running at a loss it was eventually bought by the Mohini Mills of Kushtia. A Swadeśī Śilpa Bhāṇḍār and a Yubak Bhāṇḍār were also opened to sell the products of Swadeśī industry and handicrafts.

As elsewhere in Bengal this was the period (1905-11) when the earliest of the secret extremist groups were organized in Jalpāiguri. There were thefts of arms from Mogalkātā police outpost and from an ammunition shop in Sadāgarputti in Jalpāiguri town. But the secret extremist groups of Jalpāiguri could not sustain their activities for long.

In the wake of the *Satyāgraha* movement of 1921, the Congress organization was set up in the district. The urban upper caste Hindus came forward to organize the District Congress Committee. But there was a subtle difference between these leaders and leaders of the Swadeśī and terrorist movements. After Gandhiji's advent in the Indian political scene there was an awareness of the necessity to work for the support of the peasant masses. So the people who organized the Jalpāiguri District Congress Committee felt it necessary to go to villages and plantations to enlist the support of the peasants and plantation workers and the Muslims, who till then were apathetic towards the politics of the Hindu educated gentry of the urban areas. In their enthusiasm the new converts to Gandhian ideas opened a spinning and weaving school to train the people in discipline and self-sufficiency, to make them aware of their own capacity. The school was opened in 1922 and closed down in 1925. It was followed by the opening of a weaving centre at Rāikatpārā of

Jalpāiguri town in 1925. It closed its doors in 1927. At the same time a mustard oil pressing mill was established and wound up.

In the meanwhile, two nationalist Bengali weeklies had started coming out from Jalpāiguri town. Khagendranath Dasgupta was editing *Muktivāṇī* — upholding the Congress view point and Jyotishchandra Sanyal was editing *Janamat*, upholding the Swarājya Party view point. Neither of the papers could carry on its publication for long. But *Janamat* had a longer life than *Muktivāṇī*.

The Non-cooperation movement of 1930-32 assumed the proportion of a mass movement in the district. For the first time the rural gentry took part in the movement and came forward and joined political activities. Organized attempts to politicalize the plantation workers began in the district. These attempts to organize peasants and plantation workers, set up local Congress Committees, Krishak Sabha Committees and trade union units did not go unnoticed by the British district administration. The district authorities embarked upon a course of mass arrest of leading political workers everywhere. Nearly a hundred political workers were arrested. During this movement for the first time a Muslim gentleman rose to leadership of the District Congress.

The Non-cooperation movement of 1930-32 was a multi-dimensional socio-political movement. Among its programme was the fighting of untouchability. Enthused by this Gandhian ideal, Kavirāj Satish Chandra Lahiri performed the *Dūrgāpujā* of 1931 with Jogen Datta, a gentleman from one of the untouchable castes as the priest. Lahiri himself was a Brahmin. Women also participated in the Non-cooperation movement and were arrested.

At the same time there was a small-scale revival of the terrorist movement. Two youngmen were arrested for complicity in extremist politics in Jalpāiguri town, tried and given long-term jail imprisonment.

In 1939, the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee held its Annual Conference at Jalpāiguri town. In this Conference the Provincial leaders of Krishak Sabha spoke about agrarian problems. They planted the seeds of left-wing politics among the young workers. This ultimately led to the formation of the District Committee of the Communist Party of India in 1939. After the formation of the District Committee of the Communist Party of India, the leaders began organizing the peasants, planta-

tion workers and the students. In the meanwhile, the Congress had captured the Jalpāiguri Municipality and Congressmen were also in the District Board.

In August 1942, the Congress launched its Quit India movement. Congressmen resigned from their official and semi-official posts in Municipality and District Board. All the prominent Congressmen of the district were arrested for security reasons.

It was at time that the District Committees of the Muslim League (1940) and of the Hindu Mahasabha (1940) were formed. Nawab Mosarraf Hossain was the leader of the former, while a few old Congressmen were at the helm of the latter. The District Committee of the Forward Bloc was formed in 1942.

A communal riot broke out in 1946. On 15 August 1947, Independence came with the Partition of the country, which affected Jalpāiguri district much. Under the Radcliffe Award the areas within the southern police stations of Tetuliā, Pachāgarh, Bodā, Debāganj and Pātgrām, comprising a total area of 672 square miles went to Pakistan. The Forward Bloc workers of Bodā, Dhondo Mohammad, who protested against this partition, became the first martyr of the district at the hands of the *Ansars* of Pakistan. A great influx of Bengali Hindu refugees from East Pakistan (now Bānglādesh) began which changed the demographic, social, economic and physical aspects of Jalpāiguri district.

सत्यमेव जयते

CHAPTER III

PEOPLE

The salient features of the population of Jalpāiguri district will be evident from table 1 prepared on the basis of data provided by the Census of 1971.

POPULATION

Area and population of Jalpāiguri district was found by the Census of 1971, to be distributed in the manner as given in table 2 in the two subdivisions and thirteen police stations of the district.

Areawise the largest police station is Kālchini in Ālipur Duārs subdivision. Maynāguri police station has the biggest area under its jurisdiction in Jalpāiguri Sadar subdivision. Birpārā in Ālipur Duārs subdivision is the smallest police station in area. Mātiali is the smallest police station in Sadar subdivision. Insofar as population is concerned, the Ālipur Duār police station is the largest. Jalpāiguri Sadar police station has the next largest concentration of population. It should be noted in this connexion that both these police stations include municipal towns within their bounds and it is primarily due to the existence of the towns that these police stations are populous. Mādārihāt police station in Ālipur Duārs subdivision contains the lowest population in the district.

The Census of 1961 found Jalpāiguri district inhabited by 13,59,292 persons. In the decade between 1961 and 1971 the population of the district had increased by 28.75 per cent or at the rate of 2.87 per cent per year. The percentage of growth of population between 1961 and 1971 was considerably lower than percentage of growth between 1951 and 1961. In the Census of 1961, it was found that the population of the district had increased by 48.27 over what it was in 1951, that is, the population had risen at the rate of 4.83 per cent per year.

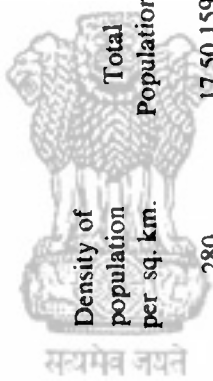
Growth of
Population

In the 1961-71 decade, the rural population of the district had increased by 28.05 per cent or 2.81 per cent per year. In the 1951-61 decade, the rural population had recorded an increase of 45.25 per cent or 4.53 per cent per year. In the 1961-71 decade, the urban population of the district recorded an increase of 35.75 per cent over the population of 1961, i.e., an increase of 3.57 per cent per year. Here too the rate of increase was lower than in the 1951-61 decade. In 1961, it was found that the urban population had increased by 35.97 per cent over the urban population of 1951, that is, an increase of 3.59 per cent per year.

Table — 1

AREA, HOUSES, HOUSEHOLDS, DENSITY, MALE AND FEMALE

POPULATION : 1971



District	Area in sq. km.	No. of occupied residential houses	No. of house- holds	Density of population per sq. km.	Total Population	Male	Female
Total	6,245.0	3,22,698	3,38,172	280	17,50,159	9,27,707	8,22,452
Rural	6,165.3	2,93,861	3,06,603	257	15,82,079	8,35,802	7,46,277
Urban	79.7	28,837	31,569	2,113	1,68,080	91,905	76,175

Table — 2

AREA, DENSITY, MALE AND FEMALE POPULATION IN THE
RURAL AND URBAN AREAS OF DIFFERENT ADMINISTRATIVE
UNITS OF JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1971

Subdivision/ Thana	Total/ Rural/ Urban	Area in sq. km.	Persons per sq. km.	Total Population	Male	Female
Jalpāiguri Sadar	Total Rural Urban	3,373.7 3,315.4 58.3	301 274 1,831	10,15,437 9,09,005 1,06,432	5,39,563 4,80,958 58,605	4,75,874 4,28,047 47,827
Rājganj P.S.	Total (Rural)	636.6	202	1,28,744	69,652	59,092
Jalpāiguri P.S.	Total Rural Urban	503.0 492.9 10.1	432 329 5,472	2,17,410 1,62,251 55,159	1,16,250 85,585 30,159	1,01,160 76,666 24,494
Māl P.S.	Total (Rural)	543.6	306	1,66,142	88,126	78,016
Mātiali P.S.	Total (Rural)	206.2	296	61,045	31,879	29,166
Maynāguri P.S.	Total (Rural)	646.4	247	1,59,764	84,517	75,247
Nāgrakātā P.S.	Total (Rural)	276.4	239	66,002	34,621	31,381

Table — 2 (contd.)

Subdivision/ Thana	Total/ Rural/ Urban	Area in sq. km.	Persons per sq. km.	Total Population	Male	Female
Dhupguri P.S.	Total (Rural)	561.5	385	2,16,330	1,14,518	1,01,812
Ālipur Duārs	Total	2,787.5	264	7,34,722	3,88,144	3,46,578
	Rural	2,766.1	243	6,73,074	3,54,844	3,18,230
	Urban	21.4	2,878	61,648	33,300	28,348
Falakātā P.S.	Total (Rural)	317.5	411	1,30,529	68,907	61,622
Mādārihāt P.S.	Total	693.5	392	2,71,766	1,43,848	1,27,918
	Rural	677.0	321	2,17,312	1,14,399	1,02,913
	Urban	16.5	3,300	54,454	29,449	25,005
Birpārā P.S.	Total (Rural)	190.8	304	57,942	30,525	27,417
Kāichini P.S.	Total (Rural)	892.0	151	1,34,467	71,647	62,820
Kumārgrām P.S.	Total (Rural)	504.0	193	97,211	50,726	46,485

The following table gives an idea of decadal variation of population in Jalpāiguri district as a whole and its rural and urban areas separately from 1901 to 1971.

Table — 3

DECADAL VARIATION OF POPULATION IN JALPAIGURI
DISTRICT : 1901-71

Total/ Rural/ Urban	Year	Population	Decadal variation	Decadal percentage variation
Total				
	1901	5,46,764		
	1911	6,63,222	+ 1,16,458	+ 21.30
	1921	6,95,946	+ 32,724	+ 4.93
	1931	7,40,993	+ 45,047	+ 6.47
	1941	8,47,841	+ 1,06,848	+ 14.42
	1951	9,16,747	+ 68,906	+ 8.13
	1961	13,59,292	+ 4,42,545	+ 48.27
	1971	17,50,159	+ 3,90,867	+ 28.75
Rural				
	1901	5,36,475		
	1911	6,51,457	+ 1,14,982	+ 21.43
	1921	6,81,133	+ 29,676	+ 4.55
	1931	7,22,031	+ 40,898	+ 6.00
	1941	8,20,075	+ 98,044	+ 13.58
	1951	8,50,602	+ 30,527	+ 3.72
	1961	12,35,478	+ 3,84,876	+ 45.25
	1971	15,82,079	+ 3,46,601	+ 28.05
Urban				
	1901	10,289		
	1911	11,765	+ 1,476	+ 14.34
	1921	14,813	+ 3,048	+ 25.91
	1931	18,962	+ 4,149	+ 28.01
	1941	27,776	+ 8,804	+ 46.43
	1951	66,154	+ 38,379	+ 138.22
	1961	1,23,814	+ 57,669	+ 87.19
	1971	1,68,080	+ 44,266	+ 35.75

While the province of Bengal registered a slow pace of population growth between 1901 and 1911 and actual decline between 1911 and 1921, Jalpāiguri district recorded a sustained growth from 1901 to 1921. In the 1911-21 decade, when rural Bengal

suffered a 4.43 per cent decline in population, rural Jalpāiguri registered a 4.55 per cent rise in population.

In the half-a-century between 1872 and 1921, the population of the district had increased by 244.2 per cent. In the same half-a-century, the population of Ālipur Duārs subdivision had increased by a fantastic 1,042.3 per cent. No other part of Bengal had in a period of comparable span, after the advent of Census, recorded such increase in population. The population of the district, between 1871 and 1921, had increased mainly through massive immigration. The district had vast tracts of forest land and cultivable waste in many areas, especially in the Ālipur Duārs subdivision. These uninhabited forest and cultivable waste lands attracted large numbers of land-hungry settlers from Rangpur, Dinājpur, Pābnā, Māldā, Rājsāhi, Bogra, Goālpārā and Mymensingh districts. *Jotedārs* of these areas welcomed the immigrants. The process of immigration and bringing of virgin land under cultivation went on unabated till 1921. Saturation point was reached around the nineteen twenties and immigration tapered off.

Another factor encouraging immigration from about 1880 onwards was a new economic activity. Tea gardens had begun to be established shortly after the formation of the district, but it was only in the eighteen eighties that their economic viability became clear. Extension of tea plantations continued at a rapid pace up to the nineteen twenties. Expansion of tea plantation and industry attracted immigrant labourers from the districts of Bīrbhūm, Bānkurā, Medinīpur, Puruliyā of West Bengal, Sāntāl Parganās, Rānchi and Pālāmau districts of Bihār and Bālāsore and Mayūrbhanj districts of Orissa. The growth of tea plantation and industry also encouraged ancillary economic activities in both rural and urban areas of Jalpāiguri favouring further immigration which tapered off around the nineteen twenties.

After 1921, the rate of growth of population in the district declined and fell below the rate of overall growth in Bengal. This situation continued till 1951. Though the Partition of the country in 1947 gave rise to the problem of influx of refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan, especially into the border districts, immigration of Hindu Refugees into Jalpāiguri was more or less counterbalanced by the emigration of Muslim refugees. But after 1951, more Hindu Refugees from East Pakistan (Bānglādes̄h) poured into Jalpāiguri than Muslims who left for that country. The rate of growth of population in Jalpāiguri in the 1951-61

decade was double the growth in West Bengal as a whole in that decade. In the following decade, that is, in 1961-71, the rate of growth in Jalpāiguri declined.

In the Census of 1961, 4,54,177 persons enumerated in the district were found to have been born outside the district. That is, Census data enumerate the first generation immigrants only. First generation immigrants formed one third of the total district population in 1961. Nearly, half of the total first generation migrants, comprising 2,18,341 persons were born in Bānglādesh districts. They constituted 16 per cent of the total population of the district. Of the 4,54,177 persons enumerated in 1961 as born outside the district, 1,58,912 persons were born in other States of India. They thus constituted nearly 35% of the first generation immigrant population and 11.7 per cent of the total district population. Most of these persons were from Bihār and Assam and some were from the Punjāb, Haryānā, Rājasthān and Uttar Pradesh. The share of other West Bengal districts in the immigrant population of Jalpāiguri was only 7.4 per cent or 33,579 persons. Table 5 prepared on the basis of the data provided by the Census of 1961 gives the urban-rural distribution of the immigrant population in Jalpāiguri district, according to the country, state and/or district of their birth.

Migration

The following statement (table 4) gives the number of first generation immigrants in Jalpāiguri district at each of the seven enumerations between 1901 and 1961.

Table — 4

Year	No. of immigrants	Year	No. of immigrants
1901	95,899	1941	1,56,765
1911	1,52,174	1951	2,78,842
1921	1,63,024	1961	4,54,177
1931	1,58,757		

The district had a density of 280 persons per square kilometre according to the 1971 Census. In the rural areas the density was 257 persons per square kilometre while in the urban areas it was 2,113 persons per square kilometre. The density was lower than the West Bengal average.

Density of
population

Jalpāiguri was all along a comparatively thinly populated district. When the first Census was taken in 1872, the density was 85 persons per square mile.

Table — 5

IMMIGRANT POPULATION IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT
ACCORDING TO PLACE OF ORIGIN : 1961

Country/State/ District of birth	Total/ Rural/ Urban	Enumerated in Jalpāiguri District Persons	Male	Female
Total District Population	Total Rural Urban	13,59,292 12,35,478 1,23,814	7,33,339 6,33,298 70,041	6,25,953 5,72,180 53,773
A. Born in India	Total Rural Urban	10,97,606 10,21,282 76,324	5,88,168 5,43,865 44,303	5,09,438 4,77,417 32,021
I. Within the State of West Bengal	Total Rural Urban	9,38,694 8,78,062 60,632	4,88,822 4,56,042 32,780	4,49,872 4,22,020 27,852
(a) Born in Jalpāi- guri district	Total Rural Urban	9,05,115 8,51,150 53,965	4,71,893 4,43,401 28,492	4,33,222 4,07,749 25,473
(b) Born in other districts of the State	Total Rural Urban	33,579 26,912 6,667	16,929 12,641 4,288	16,650 14,271 2,379
II. Born in other States of India	Total Rural Urban	1,58,912 1,43,220 15,692	99,346 87,823 11,523	59,566 55,397 4,169
B. Born in countries in Asia outside India	Total Rural Urban	2,59,795 2,12,309 47,486	1,44,082 1,18,348 25,734	1,15,713 93,981 21,752
C. Born outside Asia	Total Rural Urban	1,891 1,887 4	1,089 1,085 4	802 802 Nil
Total of all Immigrants	Total Rural Urban	4,54,177 3,84,328 69,849	2,61,446 2,19,897 41,549	1,92,731 1,64,431 28,300

The following statement shows the changes in the density of population in the district and its two subdivisions over the last seventy years.

Table — 6

VARIATION IN DENSITY (PERSONS PER SQ. KM.): 1901-71

District/ Subdivision	1971	1961	1951	1941	1931	1921	1911	1901
Jalpāiguri								
district	280	220	149	138	120	113	108	88
Sadar	301	236	163	156	139	134	137	127
Ālipur Duārs	264	202	132	115	98	87	73	43

Police stations in Ālipur Duārs subdivision are generally less densely populated than those in the Sadar subdivision. Police stations having urban areas within them naturally have a higher density of population. But Dhupguri police station having no town within it has a higher density than Ālipur Duār police station having the Ālipur Duār town within it.

In West Bengal in the last seventy years the males have always outnumbered females. In Jalpāiguri district this departure from parity had been more marked. At the turn of the present century, that is, in 1901, there were 843 females per 1,000 males. In 1951, it was found that there were 825 females per 1,000 males. From 1961, the sex-ratio showed signs of a swing back. The following statement (table 7) shows variations of sex-ratio in course of the last seventy years.

Sex-ratio

Table — 7

VARIATION IN SEX-RATIO IN JALPAIGURI : 1901-71

Females per 1,000 males in Jalpāiguri

Year	Total	Rural	Urban
1901	843	849	580
1911	829	835	559
1921	856	862	616
1931	830	838	581
1941	836	846	594
1951	825	838	679
1961	854	863	768
1971	887	893	829

For the purpose of Census a village is coterminous with a revenue survey *mouza*, which usually contains one village or hamlet but can contain more than one.

Rural-Urban
distribution

In the district there are 744 inhabited and 10 uninhabited *mouzas* or villages. 402 of the inhabited and 9 of the uninhabited villages are in Sadar subdivision and 342 of the inhabited and the remaining one uninhabited village are in Ālipur Duārs subdivision. The rural area aggregated 6,165.3 sq. km. with a population of 15,82,079 persons in 1971. In other words the rural areas covering 98.71 per cent of land area of the district contained 90.39 per cent of total district population. In 1961, it was found that the rural areas of the district accounted for 90.90 per cent of the population.

There are 13 villages to every 100 sq. km. of rural area. The maximum concentration of villages is seen in Fālākātā police station where there are 20 villages on an average in every 100 sq. km. The number is lowest in the police stations of Kālchīni and Rājganj. In both, there are 5 villages on an average in every 100 sq. km.

The Census of 1971 found 2,126 persons on an average in an inhabited village. The average population of an inhabited village in Jalpāiguri Sadar subdivision is higher than the district average, whereas the average population of a village in Ālipur Duārs subdivision is lower than the district average.

According to the Census of 1971, only 9.61 per cent of the total district population live in the urban areas. Though there had been a marked growth of urban population between 1901 and 1971 and especially between 1941 and 1951, the rural-urban ratio of population has remained substantially unaltered. In course of the last seventy years, that is, from 1901 to 1971, while the urban population of the district has grown on an average at the rate of 5.37 per cent per year over the urban population stock of 1901, the rural population has grown at the average rate of 1.75 per cent per year over the rural population stock of 1901.

The district does not have any towns with long tradition. Only two towns, namely, Jalpāiguri and Ālipur Duār have the legal status of towns, being municipalities. But the Census authorities have declared other areas as towns, since each of them has population exceeding 5,000 persons, density of 1,000 persons or more per square mile, three-fourth of working population engaged in occupations other than agriculture and urban amenities like educational institutions, medical care institutions, and trade centres. Table 8 in Appendix A prepared on the basis of Census data illustrates the growth of towns in the district.

According to the Census of 1961, out of a total population of 13,59,292 persons in Jalpāiguri District, 7,40,829 persons declared Bengali as their mother tongue. Speakers of Bengali as first language thus constituted 54.50 per cent of the total population. Bengali mother tongue group not only included Bengalee Hindus and Muslims, but also a majority of Rājbanis and a fair percentage of Meches. Out of a total of 3,16,020 ethnic Rājbanis only 18,687 or 6 per cent declared Koch and/or Rājbanis as their mother tongue and the rest declared Bengali to be their mother tongue; and out of a total of 13,178 ethnic Meches 9,936 persons or 75.39 per cent declared Mech language to be their mother tongue. The Koches and/or Rājbanis and the Meches were speakers (at least 75.39 per cent of the Meches still are) of the Boḍo sub-family of the Tibeto-Burman family of languages. With their Hinduization they have gradually shown preference for Bengali. The Bengali written prose was introduced in the Koch Bihār court after the Koches had become Hinduized, founded a kingdom and became Rājbanis. Status climbing was perhaps a motivation behind the shift in language among the Koch-Rājbanis, as also the fact of Hinduization. That is perhaps the reason why very few of the urban based Rājbanis declared Koch or Rājbanis to be their mother tongue. The Rājbanis of the rural areas in general and also most Hindus and Muslims — who have been living in the district for generations — speak a dialect of the colloquial Bengali which the educated people designate as *Bāhé*.

LANGUAGE

Bengali

The speakers of Kurukh-Orāon as the first language form the numerically most significant group after the Bengali mother tongue group. The persons who declared Kurukh, Orāon, Kurukh-Orāon, Kisān-Kurukh and/or Lohāri-Kurukh as their mother tongue, during the Census of 1961, numbered 1,61,953 and constituted 11.91 per cent of the population. Nearly 89 per cent of the ethnic Orāons of the district declared Kurukh, or Orāon, or Kurukh-Orāon, or Kisān-Kurukh or Lohāri-Kurukh to be their mother tongue. Orāon speakers are not autochthones of the district. They began to immigrate into and settle in the district with the opening of tea gardens in the middle of the last century. They came from Rānchi, Pālāmau and Sāntāl Parganās districts of Bihār and Puruliā and Bānkurā districts of West

Kurukh-Orāon

Bengal. A large majority of the Kurukh-Orāon speakers of Jalpāiguri are residents of rural areas. Of the 2,081 ethnic Orāons found living in the urban areas, only 11 persons or 0.52 per cent of urban Orāon population declared Kurukh-Orāon as their mother tongue; the rest probably declared either Bengali or Hindi as their first language. Kurukh-Orāon is a language of the Dravidian family. The vocabulary of the Indo-Aryan family of languages like Bengali and Hindi have made considerable inroads into the stock of words of Kurukh-Orāon speakers of the district.

Languages of
Nepalese origin

Speakers of different Indo-Aryan and Himālayan group of Tibeto-Burman languages of Nepalese origin, like Khaskura Nepāli or Gorkhāli, Newāri, Gurung, Mangar, Rai, Limbu, Sherpa, Kami and Tamang, etc. together form the numerically most significant group after the Kurukh speakers. The difficulty about enumeration of the speakers of these languages is that, though some of the Newārs, Gurungs, Mangars, Rais, Limbus, Sherpas, Kamis and Tamangs have declared their respective original languages as their mother tongues, most of them, on the other hand, have declared Khaskura Nepāli, often misrepresented as Gorkhāli, as their mother tongue. According to the Census of 1961, there were altogether 1,13,043 persons who had declared a language of Nepālese origin as their mother tongue (this included 60 speakers of Gorkhāli, 296 speakers of Gurung, 5 of Kami, 75 of Limbu, 495 of Mangar, 1,09,253 of Khaskura Nepāli, 28 of Newāri, 109 of Rai, 46 of Sherpa and 2,667 of Tamang). Together they accounted for 8.31 per cent of the total population. Speakers of the languages of Nepalese origin are not autochthones of the district. They began to immigrate into and settle down in the district, especially in the western parts of the district, as agriculturists, from the beginning of the eighteenth century. Most of the early immigrants who settled down after clearing forests in Baikunthapur *Parganā* were from Morang district of south-east Nepāl. Opening of tea gardens in the mid-nineteenth century led to stepping up of the rate of immigration from eastern Nepāl.

Hindi

The persons who returned either Hindi (95,073 persons), Hindusthāni (5 persons), Bhojpuri (27 persons), Bihāri (36 persons), Gārhwāli (585 persons), Kumāyuni (3 persons), Nāgri-Hindi (219 persons), Rājasthāni (681 persons), Rājputāni (12 persons) and Tharu Awadhi (3 persons), together numbered 96,644 and accounted for 7.11 per cent of the total population. There is some justification for clubbing their mother tongues together,

For, while languages like Bhojpuri, Gārhwāli and Rājasthāni are distinct languages by their own rights, not all speakers of Bhojpuri, Gārhwāli and Rājasthāni have returned their respective first languages as their mother tongue. Secondly, there are some languages like Bihāri which can at best be regarded as dialects of Hindi. The list also contains names of certain languages, which if classified properly would fall in the category of Hindi, like Nāgri-Hindi. Hindi speakers are well distributed between the urban and the rural areas of the district. They are not autochthones of the district and a large majority of them are first generation immigrants still retaining ties with their places of origin.

During the Census of 1961, a total of 3,604 persons declared Urdu as their mother tongue. A large majority of them comprising 3,085 persons or 85.59 per cent of the Urdu speakers were residents of the rural areas of the district. Although a majority of the people who declared Urdu to be their mother tongue were immigrants from outside West Bengal, some were of local origin. Among the Muslim landed gentry, especially among the Saiyads and other Ashrafs of Bengal, Urdu speaking was a sign of status. In Jalpāiguri district there had been several families of Muslim landed gentry, like the family of Colonel Hedayat Ali and Nawab Mosarraf Hossain.

According to the Census of 1961, a total of 76,610 persons declared Sadani or Sadri as their mother tongue. They constituted 5.63 per cent of the population. All of them were inhabitants of the rural areas of the district. According to a scholar¹, Sadani or Sadri is a pan-tribal language of recent origin. It is a bazar patois made up of Hindi and Bengali, resorted to by the Dravidian speaking Orāons and Austric speaking Muṇḍās and Hos to communicate with those who did not speak their mother tongue. But in a settlement where one has to resort oftener to a language of wider communication than one's own mother tongue, one becomes more accustomed to speaking the second language and in course of time the second language becomes the first language. Sadri or Sadani has become a pan-tribal dialect of Hindi and a mother tongue of many original speakers of Kurukh, Muṇḍā and Ho in this manner.

¹ Sankarananda Mukerji — 'Sadani : The Tribal Dialect of the Sundarbans' in *Bulletin of the Cultural Research Institute*, Vol. III, No. 2, 1964, Calcutta, pp. 47-50.

Madhesi

There were 4,283 persons in the rural areas of Jalpāiguri district in 1961 who declared Madhesi to be their first language. Madhesi like Sadani is a made up dialect of Hindi as spoken by tribals who once had other mother tongues. Linguistically, Madhesi differs very little from Sadani or Sadri.

Muṇḍā

In the Census of 1961, altogether 43,749 persons, constituting 3.21 per cent of the total population, declared Muṇḍā to be their mother tongue. Muṇḍā is a language of the Muṇḍāri group of the Austric family, spoken by Muṇḍās. Muṇḍās are not autochthones of the district. They began to immigrate into and settle in the district with the opening of the tea gardens from the middle of the last century.

Sāntāli

Sāntāli is another language of the Muṇḍāri group of the Austric family and is spoken by Sāntāls who also began to immigrate into and settle in the rural areas of the district as tea garden labourers. In 1961, there were 27,413 persons, constituting 2.01 per cent of total population who declared Sāntāli to be their mother tongue.

Rājibansi

There were 18,673 persons, all in the rural areas of the district, in 1961, who had declared Rājibansi to be their mother tongue. At the same time there were 3,16,020 ethnic Rājibansis in the district, with 3,08,121 of them in the rural areas. Thus only 5.90 per cent of the ethnic Rājibansis declared Rājibansi to be their mother tongue. The rest presumably declared Bengali to be their mother tongue. Rājibansi can hardly be regarded as a language; it is a dialect of Bengali, spoken by Rājibansis and other people who once used to speak some Tibeto-Burman language of the Bodo group. This dialect is also known by as *Bāhé*. Before they adopted the Rājibansi or *Bāhé* dialect of Bengali, the Rājibansis — then Koches — used to speak the Koch language, a language of the Bodo group of Tibeto-Burman family. Curiously enough, in the Census of 1961, 310 persons, all from the rural areas of the district and 309 of them being females, declared Koch to be their mother tongue.

Bodo or Boro

There were 5,773 persons in the district in 1961, who had declared Bodo or Boro as their mother tongue. It is difficult to say to which ethnic community they belonged. We know that Bodo or Boro is a language of the Bodo group of Tibeto-Burman family, spoken by the Kāchhāris of the plains; but there are no Kāchhāris in this district. There were of course 619 Gāros who probably spoke Gāro — a language of the Bodo group. But that does not account for 5,778 Bodo speakers. It

therefore, seems that the 5,773 persons who had declared Boḍo to be their mother tongue were actually Meches.

There were 9,936 persons in the district in 1961 who had declared the Mech language to be their mother tongue. But there were altogether 13,053 ethnic Meches in the district in 1961. If we assume that 5,779 Boḍo speakers were all Meches, then the number of Boḍo-Mech speakers far exceed the number of ethnic Meches in the district. Probably, some among the 5,779 Boḍo speaking persons were Meches and some were Rābhās, since the Rābhā language, like the Mech language, is a language of the Boḍo group of the Tibeto-Burman family.

Mech

There were 4,506 persons in the district in 1961 who had declared the Rābhā language as their mother tongue. Rābhā is a language of the Boḍo group of the Tibeto-Burman family of languages.

Rabha

Mālpāhāri, or Māler or Mālto, a language of the Dravidian family, was returned by 2,730 persons as their mother tongue in 1961. But only 1,774 persons had, during the same Census, declared themselves to be ethnic Mālpāhāriyās.

Malpahari

Toto, although demographically a small language, spoken as mother tongue by only 376 ethnic Totos, deserves special mention because Totos are an autochthonous tribe of the district. Toto is a language of the Non-pronominalized Himālayan group of the Tibeto-Burman family of languages, like the Gurung, Mangar and Lepchā.

Toto

The overall linguistic picture of the district is that the autochthonous peoples of the district like the Koches and Meches once largely spoke the language of the Boḍo group of the Tibeto-Burman family. Totos spoke a language of the Himalayan group of Tibeto-Burman family. With the Hinduization of the Koches and the influx of Bengalee Hindus and Muslims, a large number of former Boḍo speakers began to speak Bengali and developed a distinct dialect of Bengali. With the opening of tea gardens from the middle of the nineteenth century, large number of Dravidian speaking Orāons and Austric speaking Muṇḍās and Santals began to immigrate into and settle in the district. In course of time Orāon, Muṇḍa and Sāntāl became demographically significant languages of the district. For communication these speakers resorted to a dialect of Hindi or Bengali known as Sadri or Sadani or Madhesi. In course of time the dialect became a demographically significant mother tongue.

RELIGION

Hinduism, Islam and Christianity are the main religious persuasions of the population of Jalpāiguri district. The following table prepared from the data provided by the Censuses, shows the distribution of population between different religious persuasions and variations in their growth.

Table — 9		1961-71 decadal percentage variation	
Religious Community	1961	1971	
<i>Hindu</i>			
Total Hindu population	11,60,954	15,19,201	
Percentage of total population	85.41	86.81	+ 30.86
<i>Muslim</i>			
Total Muslim population	1,29,771	1,56,992	
Percentage of total population	9.55	8.97	+ 20.98
<i>Christian</i>			
Total Christian population	48,570	55,707	
Percentage of total population	3.57	3.18	+ 14.69
<i>Buddhist</i>			
Total Buddhist population	18,258	15,628	
Percentage of total population	1.34	0.89	— 14.40
<i>Jain</i>			
Total Jain population	780	1,572	
Percentage of total population	0.05	0.08	+ 75.90
<i>Sikh</i>			
Total Sikh population	950	1,253	
Percentage of total population	0.06	0.07	+ 31.89

Hinduism

Hindus form numerically the largest religious group. But Hinduism as practised by the so-called upper castes differ from Hinduism as practised by the Scheduled Castes like the Rājbanis. The Hinduism as practised by the Rājbanis again has its differences from and similarities with the religion as practised by the Meches and Rābhās. Sāntāls, though they scrupulously

observe their traditional religious practices and cling to their age old theological beliefs, declare themselves to be Hindus.

Worship of Śiva, in different forms, took root in Jalpāiguri district. The worship of Śiva spread because the Purāṇic Śiva in his dynamic and malevolent form got syncretically identified with the concept of the supreme male principle held by the autochthonous Koches, Meches and Rābhās. Their concept of the supreme male principle fitted with the *dhyāna-rūpa* of Purāṇic Mahākāl. In the medieval Tāntric Śaivism of the caste Hindus of Bengal the Mahākāl form of Śiva held greater attraction. Tāntric Śaivism, therefore, acted as the catalytic agent in the Hinduization of the Koches, Meches and Rābhās. Even to this day, Mahākāl is the presiding male divinity among the Rājbanis, Meches and Rābhās. Mahākāl of Jalpāiguri-Koch Bihār region is a regional Hindu divinity.

In each Rājbanis settlement there is "*thān*" or "*sthān devatā*" or village divinity. In some villages he is identified with the Mahākāl and in some with the female divinity Mā Manasā. In each Rābhā settlement there is also a "*thān*" or "*sthān devatā*" identified with Rishi, the supreme male divinity of the Rābhās; Mahākāl is another name for Rishi.¹ The great god of the Meches, Bāthou is worshipped in form of a *si*j (*Euphorbia Nirifolia*) plant and is often addressed as Śiva or Mahākāl and is worshipped in every household.²

The most famous Mahākāl deity of the district is worshipped in the form of a huge *līṅgam* or phallic symbol at Jayanti in Alipur Duārs subdivision. His annual festival is held on the *Śivarātri* night. Pilgrims from distant places congregate on the occasion of the festival. There is a village called Purvadahar near Mallikerhat, where a *Śiva-līṅgam* is worshipped as Jatileśvar Śiva. Bateśvar Śiva is worshipped at Madhavadanga. The most famous Śiva of Jalpāiguri is Jalpeśvar Śiva of Jalpeś. Local people believe it to be one of the 52 Śākta Tāntric *Pīṭhas* of India. The largest fair of North Bengal is held on the occasion of the annual festival of Jalpeśvar Śiva in which traders from Bhutān and Sikkim and pilgrims from far away districts congregate.

Since Śiva-Mahākāl is the presiding male divinity of the district, it is only natural to expect that Śakti in her different manifesta-

¹ A. K. Das & M. K. Raha — *The Rabhas of West Bengal*, Calcutta, 1967, p. 132.

² Charuchandra Sanyal — *The Meches and the Totos of North Bengal*, Raja Rammohanpur, 1973, pp. 12, 48.

tions would be worshipped in the district; for, in Tāntric conception the male principle cannot exist without the female principle and *vice versa*. In Jalpāiguri town there is a Kālī temple. This Kālī is said to have been established and worshipped by a dacoit named Nayan Kapālī. In Bengal the Hindu dacoits have a tradition of Kālī worship. In the southern limits of Jalpāiguri town, Śakti is worshipped in the form of Devī Bhadrakālī. There are several other Kālī temples in the town. A very interesting female divinity is Devī Manthani of the village of Manthani in Jalpāiguri Sadar subdivision. Legend has it that she was worshipped by Devī Chaudhurāṇī, the famous female dacoit of the eighteenth century, whom Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya, the famous novelist, has immortalized. One female divinity demands special attention. She is Bhandani. Bhandani is worshipped widely in the tract of the district lying between the Tistā in the west and the Rājdāk in the east. Bhandani worship is an annual religious observance for the people of the region. Bhandani was possibly a female divinity of non-Purāṇic and non-Hindu origin; for, locally the Bhandani-pujā is still known as the “*dāṅg dhorī māo pūjā*”. “*Dāṅg dhorī māo*” does not mean anything in any Indo-Aryan language. It might mean something in the Bodo languages like Koch, Mech and Rābhā.

Manasā is the most widely worshipped female divinity of Jalpāiguri district. In almost every Rājibansi settlement, there is a “*thān*” or “*sthān*” where the presiding divinity of the settlement is worshipped. One either finds Mahākāl or Manasā as the presiding divinity. In almost every rural Rājibansi household one finds two very small rooms little away from the main house. One of these rooms contains a symbolic image of Manasā and the other either of Mahākāl or of Kālī. If both the rooms are occupied by female divinities, these would jointly be called the “*thākuraṇī thān*”,¹ and if one of these is occupied by Mahākāl, then the other would be known by the same appellation. The Rājibansis commence all their ritual acts by propitiating Manasā first. Among the Meches² and the Rābhās, similar attitude is found.

Runtuk and Bāsek³ are joint female divinities. They are never to be found singly. They are two of the original and non-

¹ Charuchandra Sanyal — *The Rajibansis of North Bengal*, Calcutta, 1965, p. 124.

² Charuchandra Sanyal — *The Meches and The Totos of North Bengal*, Raja Ram Mohanpur, 1973, p. 12.

³ Sunil Pal — ‘Rābhā O Tāder Devī Runtuk Bāsek’ in *Jalpāiguri Jelā Śatabārshiki Smarak Grantha*, Jalpāiguri, 1970, pp. 215-19.

integrated and as yet non-syncretic divinities the Rābhās are worshipping. They are usually referred to as "*thānsiri*" or "*ghar-deo*" or household divinities. They are represented by two earthen pitchers filled with rice and hen's egg placed on the top of each. Both the pitchers are then wrapped up in white cloths with red borders. Incense, vermilion, cotton wool, rice paste, liquor, pork, chicken, rice and bananas are offered to them.

The Sāntāls have their own pantheon of gods, still retaining their original identity. Sāntāls still carry on their traditional ritual practices with the help of their traditional priestly group of people known as Murmus. The Orāons, Muṇḍās and Hos who have not been converted to Christianity, are divided between Hinduized and not yet Hinduized sections. The Hinduized Orāons, Muṇḍās and Hos who usually describe themselves as Madhesiyās and speak Sadri or Sadani as mother tongue, syncretically identify their original gods and goddesses with Purāṇic Hindu gods and goddesses and worship Hindu gods and goddesses in addition to their syncretic divinities. Not yet Hinduized Orāons, Muṇḍās and Hos, like Sāntāls, still retain their pantheon of divinities with their original conceptions.

Religion of the
Santals, Oraons,
Mundas and Hos

The nineteenth century movements to reform the Hindu society and religion like Brāhmoism and Bhaktivādi-Śāktadharma of Rāmakrishṇa and Yuktivādi-Sevādharma of Vivekananda also made their impact felt. The Brāhmo congregation hall of Jalpāiguri town was established in the year 1901 and Rāmakrishṇa Mission was established in 1923. Both Brāhmo Samāj and Rāmakrishṇa Mission did much for the spread of modern education especially the female education and social service. Their influence and sphere of activity were limited to the educated middle classes of the urban areas. Brāhmos, however, made an attempt to detribalize the Meches by educating some of them. The result had been that the Brāhmos succeeded in Hinduizing some of them.¹

Reform
movements

The Theosophy movement of Annie Besant too had a temporary influence on the educated Hindus of the district. A Theosophical Lodge was established in Jalpāiguri town in 1923.²

¹ Charuchandra Sanyal — *The Meches and the Totos of North Bengal*, Raja Rammohanpur, 1973, pp. 41-42 and 50-51.

² Charuchandra Sanyal — 'Jalpāiguri Saharer Eksobachhar' in *Jalpāiguri Jela Satabārshikī Smarak Grantha*, Jalpāiguri, 1970, p. 97.

Islam

In the thirteenth century, a Mech chieftain was converted to Islam by Bakhtyār Khalji. It can be presumed that the Mech chieftain 'Ali the Mech' did not embrace the religion singly, but was followed by a band of his clansmen and women. Writing in 1911, J. F. Gruning reported that the Sheikhs and the Nasyas, who composed the majority of the Muslims of the district, were, in the main, natives of the district and in their appearance, dress and customs differed very little from the Rājbanis.¹ Gruning, of course, conceded that a large number of Sheikhs and Nasya Muslims were originally immigrants from Rangpur, Dinājpur, Koch Bihār and Pābnā. It seems that Bengalee Muslim peasants from the above named districts were some of the earliest settlers who cleared forests and introduced settled cultivation. In 1901, the Muslims composed 29.81 per cent of the then district population. They were not an insignificant minority composed of immigrants. They were very much the sons of the soil. As the Muslim population, in the main, is composed of peasants and agricultural labourers, orthodox Islam which is usually sustained by the landed gentry is not prominent. Islam, especially in the rural areas, is a folkish form, characterised by worship of Pirs and Mursheds. Muslim landed gentry have been adherents of orthodox Islam. It is due to the efforts of the latter that mosques were built. The first mosque of Jalpāiguri town was built by Khan Bahadur Rahim Bux in 1875. Another mosque at Dinbazar locality, was established in 1902 by Mohammad Ibrahim. Id and Muharram are celebrated everywhere where there is a sizeable Muslim population.

Christianity

The Church Missionary Society was the earliest Christian mission to start work among the rural people especially among the immigrant tea-garden labourers in Ālipur Duārs subdivision. The Society started its evangelical and social service work sometime in the eighties of the last century. They could convert a good number of Sāntāls to Christianity within a short time. The Society opened an agricultural colony with Christian Sāntāl agriculturists in 1890.

The American Baptist Missionary Society began work in 1888. By 1898, they converted 20 persons to Christianity. But the work of this organization was mostly evangelical in nature. The missionaries preached the gospel in villages, *bāzārs* and *hāts*.

¹ J. F. Gruning — *op. cit.*, pp. 35-6.

The Kālimpong Mission of the Church of Scotland began functioning among the tea-garden labourers of Ālipur Duārs sub-division from its station in Gorubāthān in Kālimpong sub-division of Dārjiling district. It converted a number of tribals to Christianity.

Among the Christians of the district, Protestants predominate; there are very few Catholics. The largest number of Christians are found among the Orāons and then in descending order among the Munḍās, Hos, Bhutiās, Meches and Sāntāls.

The first church in the district, founded in 1882 in Jalpāiguri town, was for the Europeans only. In 1896, a church was established in Jalpāiguri town for the native Christians. Both are Protestant churches.

A majority of the Himālayan group of Tibeto-Burman language speaking Bhutiās, — including the Dukpas, Kagatays, Yolmos, Tibetan Bhutiās, Sikkimese Bhutiās, Bhutānese Bhutiās, Sherpas from Nepāl and Sikkim. Toto autochthones of Jalpāiguri, Chākmās, Maghs and Mrus from Tripurā and Chittagong Hill Tracts, some of the Newārs (Buddhamārgi) and Limbus from Nepāl, — found in the district, were Buddhists. While the 709 Chākmās, 83 Maghs and 443 Mrus were Theravādi (Hinayāni) Buddhists, all the others were either Mahāyāni, Vajrayāni or Kālachakrayāni Buddhists. All the schools are characterized by their adherence to magical rites and practices and have large pantheons of Bodhisattvas, Buddhas, other gods, goddesses, benevolent and malevolent spirits and demons. Some of these gods and goddesses, spirits and demons are conceptually syncretic entities, in which the original tribal divinities and spirits have got merged with Tāntric Hindu and Mahāyāni Buddhist Tāntric divinities and symbols.

Buddhism

The Jains and Sikhs are relatively recent settlers in the district. The Mārwāri Jains and Sikhs from the Punjab began to immigrate into and settle in the district, respectively from the middle of the last century and the twenties of the present century.

Jains and Sikhs

The size of the family depends more on the size of the income of the family than on any other factor such as ethnic, religious, customary beliefs and practices. Table 10 prepared from

SOCIAL LIFE

Family

Table—10

Occupational description of household		Percentage of total Rural/Urban household	Average no. of persons per household	Average no. of males per household	Average no. of females per household
A. All types of rural households		100.00	4.8	2.6	2.2
1.	Households engaged neither in cultivation nor in household industry, such as in tea plantation	50.00	4.2	2.2	1.9
2.	Households engaged in household industry only	1.6	4.2	2.4	1.7
3.	Households engaged in cultivation	48.5	5.6	3.0	2.6
	(a) holding less than 1 acre	4.0	4.5	2.3	2.2
	(b) holding 1—2.4 acres	6.9	4.5	2.4	2.1
	(c) holding 2.5—4.9 acres	14.7	4.9	2.6	2.3
	(d) holding 5.0—7.4 acres	14.6	5.8	3.1	2.7
	(e) holding 7.5—9.9 acres	2.7	7.3	3.9	3.4
	(f) holding 10.0—12.4 acres	3.0	8.1	4.4	3.7
	(g) holding 12.5—14.9 acres	0.6	9.0	4.9	4.1
	(h) holding 15.0—29.9 acres	1.6	9.4	5.0	4.4
	(i) holding 30.0—49.9 acres	0.08	10.4	5.5	4.9
	(j) holding over 50 acres	0.02	11.4	7.0	4.4
B. All urban households		100.00	5.9	3.2	2.7

the data provided by the Census of 1961 shows the relation between occupation, extent of land held and size of the family in the rural areas of the district and also the average size of family in the urban areas. It may be mentioned that 95.5 per cent of the total number of households (household being defined as a unit of persons living in common mess and under the same roof) belonged to rural areas and only 4.5 per cent to urban areas.

The Bengalee Hindus in general follow the *Dāyabhāga* system of inheritance. Though the Rājbanis, Mech, Orāon, Muṇḍā, Sāntāl, Nāgesīā and Māhāli traditional systems of inheritance are different from the *Mitākshara* and the *Dāyabhāga* systems of inheritance, yet the Orāons, Muṇḍās, Sāntāls, Nagesias and Māhālis now-a-days are inclined to follow the *Mitākshara* system of inheritance, while the Rājbanis and Meches had long been following the *Dāyabhāga* system. The Rābhās had a matrilinear line of succession which is changing fast to patrilinear. Those Rābhās who live in hills and jungles still retain the matrilinear line of succession, matrilinear line of descent and matrilocal system of residence. The majority of the Muslims of the district are guided by the Hanafi code in the matter of inheritance.

Inheritance

Table 11 taken from the Census of 1961 shows the marital status of the males and females of various significant age groups and also the changes between 1951 and 1961.

Marriage

This table shows that the age of marriage, both for men and women, has risen, and unmarried persons are more frequently found. Both as a result of fall in the death-rate as well as the diminution of the age gap between spouses, the number of widows and widowers has declined. Before the enactment of the Hindu Marriages Act of 1955, divorce was unknown among the *dwija-varṇa*, *satśudra* and *navaśākha* Hindus. Those of the *a-sat-śudra a-jalchal* or untouchable Hindus who through their affluence aspired to higher ritual status also imitated this custom of the upper caste Hindus. But among a number of the so-called *a-sat-śudra a-jalchal* castes divorce was never a taboo, nor was marriage of widows and divorced women. Among the Orāons, Muṇḍās, Sāntāls, Hos, Nagesias and Māhālis both divorce and marriage of the divorcees were in vogue. Divorce was in vogue among the Muslims of the district according to their marriage law. The Hindu Marriages Act has now made divorce legal for all Hindus.

Table — 11

Year	Age-group	Never Married		Married		Widowed		Divorced/Separated	
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1951	All ages	49.38	43.11	45.10	45.52	5.52	11.37	..	..
	0-14 yrs.	98.97	93.65	0.98	6.13	0.52	0.22	..	..
	15-34 "	39.16	11.69	57.28	83.10	3.56	5.21	..	..
	35-54 "	3.24	0.95	84.76	63.00	12.00	36.05	..	..
	55 + "	1.30	0.68	73.98	24.10	24.72	75.22	..	..
1961	All ages	56.20	48.34	38.91	41.86	4.28	9.21	0.61	0.59
	0-14 yrs.	99.70	97.58	0.24	2.30	0.00	0.01	0.06	0.11
	15-34 "	46.38	10.96	50.64	85.30	1.99	2.68	0.99	1.06
	35-54 "	3.94	0.36	85.05	69.98	9.99	28.68	1.02	0.98
	55 + "	2.33	0.54	71.64	24.87	25.22	73.96	0.81	0.63

All Hindu castes and tribes are normally endogamous. The tribal people who have embraced Christianity are not under any compulsion to stick to the rules of endogamy though they usually prefer to remain endogamous. The Special Marriages Act of 1954 has legalized marriages between spouses of different castes, tribes and even religions, provided the relationship of the spouses does not fall within the prohibited degrees. The Hindu Marriages Act of 1955 has made all Hindu marriages contractual though sacramental rites are usually performed. Table 12 in Appendix B given the number of cases relating to marital relations in the Hindu community in the district for some selected years. The figures do not include the cases of Muslims, Orāons, Muṇḍās, Sāntāls, Hos, Nāgesiās, Māhālis, Meches and Rābhās which are disposed of according to traditional customs and practices by their traditional authorities.

Among the Rājbanis and tribals marriage through understanding reached between the would-be bride and the groom, marriage by capture in front of witnesses, etc. were in vogue and are not still unknown though these practices are now replaced by negotiations. Among the Hindus and Muslims marriage by negotiations is the predominant form. Of late, among the educated Hindus marriage by understanding reached between the would-be bride and the groom is on the increase. When such marriages between parties belonging to different castes take place, they are usually registered under the Special Marriages Act of 1954. The following table 13 shows the number of marriages registered in the district under the Special Marriages Act of 1954 and the Hindu Marriages Act of 1955, for some selected years.

Table — 13

Year	Marriages registered under the Special Marriages Act 1954	Marriages registered under the Hindu Marriages Act 1955
1955-56	4	..
1960-61	21	..
1965-66	49	..
1970-71	68	8
1973-74	64	1

Paying of bride price which was very common among the Rājbanis, Meches, Rābhās, Nāgesiās, Mālpāhāriyas, etc. is giving way to dowry as prevalent among the so-called upper caste Hindus.

Widow marriage, though legal even for the *dwijavarna*, *sat-śudra* and *navaśākha* Hindus, is not common. The custom prevails among the Meches, Rābhās, Sāntāls, Orāons, Muṇḍās, Hos, Nāgesiās, Māhālis, Gāros, Bhutiās, etc. It is prevalent among the Muslims. The Rājbandi widow sometimes lives like man and wife, with a person known as *dānguā*, their children having the customary right to inherit property.

Dress

Hindu and Muslim women of the relatively well-off classes wear *śāḍis* and blouses with petticoats and bodices inside. The Muslim women of the same classes also use a *burkhā* while going out. The Hindu and Muslim women of the poorer classes use shorter *śāḍis* and occasionally blouses. The older women of the villages usually do not wear blouses. The older Rājbandi, Mech, Rābhā and Gāro women do not use a *śāḍi* in the same way as the Hindus and Muslims do. They tie a *luṅgi* or a *śāḍi* over their breasts and let it hang a little above the ankles. They call it *fota-kāpad*. They use no upper or lower garment separately but use a wrapper-type of unsewn cloth as under-garment for the lower part of the body. Young Rājbandi, Mech, Rābhā and Gāro girls, especially of the urban areas, wear the same kind of dress as the Bengalee Hindu and Muslim girls of similar age groups. The Bhutiā women don the flowing gown called the *bakku*. It is worn with an upper garment called the *hanju*. Totos dress like the Meches or Gāros.

Men, depending on their economic status, either don trousers and shirts or their traditional dresses. In rural areas, people of the older generation especially don the traditional dresses. On festive occasions the males generally wear traditional dresses. The traditional dress for the Hindu male is the *dhōti* and the *pāñjābi* or *kurtā* or shirt, with or without an additional *uḍunī* or *chādar*. The traditional dress for a Muslim male is the *luṅgi* or *pāyjamā* and the *pāñjābi* or *kurtā*. Hindu and Muslim poor peasants and agricultural labourers like their tribal neighbours usually wear a very short *dhōti* akin to a loin-cloth. Sāntāl, Muṇḍā, Orāon, Bhutiā and Mech males working in tea gardens wear shorts and half-shirts generally. Wearing of under-garments like the under-pants and *geñjis* or vests depend upon the economic status of the wearer. The *geñji* or the vest is often worn by the poor people as proper covering for the upper part of the body.

Houses

The Census of 1971 conducted a sample survey of the materials used for constructing the walls and roofs of the houses in

Jalpāiguri district. The following table 14 taken from the Census of 1971 shows the percentage distribution of houses in the rural and urban areas according to the materials used.

Table — 14

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSES ACCORDING TO MATERIALS USED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF WALLS

Rural/ Urban	Grass, reeds, leaves, bamboo, mud, wattle, wood	Burnt brick, C.I. sheets, stone, cement concrete	All other materials
Rural	81.2	18.6	2.2
Urban	61.8	37.9	3.3

Table — 15

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSES ACCORDING TO MATERIALS USED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF ROOFS

Rural/Urban	Grass, reeds, thatch, mud, wood, bamboo	Tiles, slates, shingle	C. I. sheets	Asbestos cement sheet	Brick, lime & mortar	Concrete R.B.C./R.C.C.	All other materials
Rural	60.6	4.6	27.2	5.8	1.0	1.5	2
Urban	14.6	4.7	61.5	9.8	6.0	8.8	Nil

In the rural areas of Jalpāiguri houses having walls of bamboo, reeds, and roofs of bamboo, reeds, corrugated iron sheets, corrugated asbestos sheets, tiles and shingles are usually built on stilts of bamboo, logs of wood or burnt bricks. The house, therefore, appears a little raised from the ground level. One has to enter the house by climbing a short flight of stairs. Such houses are also found in urban areas. These are generally single-storied. The roofs are always slanting; two or four such slanting sides joined at the top make a roof. The traditional Rājibansi, Mech, Rābhā and Gāro houses have the same appearance.

In houses of this type a rectangular ground-plan with no projections and recessions is followed. Sometimes the plan is L-shaped or U-shaped.

A household may or may not be housed in one unit. The more affluent the family, the greater is the likelihood of finding

more than one unit of construction in the same compound. In a Mech, Rābhā, Sāntāl, Orāon or Gāro household one additional unit would be a pigsty. In Rājibansi household one additional unit would be *ṭhākurañūr thān*. The second additional unit in Mech and Rābhā household would be *ṭhākurañūr thān*.

Regarding the average big and medium sized village, most of them look like amorphous agglomerates of isolated homesteads. Small hamlets, however, show some linear feature.



APPENDIX A
GROWTH OF TOWNS IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1901-71

Table — 8

Name of the town	Status	Function	year	Area in sq. km.	Persons	Decade variation	Decadal percentage variation
Jalpāiguri	M *	Service	1901 1911 1921 1931 1941 1951 1961 1971	... ... ... ... ... ... 10.08 10.08	9,708 11,469 14,520 18,962 27,766 41,259 48,738 55,159	+ + + + + + + +	18.14 26.60 30.59 46.43 48.60 18.13 13.17
Ālipur Duār	M	Trade & Commerce	1951 1961 1971	9.30 9.30 9.30	24,886 28,927 36,667	+ + +	16.24 26.76
Ālipur Duār Rty. Jn. (Comprising parts of <i>mauzās</i> of Paschim Jitpur, Chechakhātā & Bholardabrī)	NM (Rty. township)	Transport	1971	7.20	17,787		

Table — 8 (concl'd.)

Name of the town	Status	Function	year	Area in sq. km.	Persons	Decade variation	Decadal percentage variation
Maynāguri (Comprising Maynāguri, Dakshin Kuamari, Bengkandi)	NM	Trade & Commerce	1961 1971	12.38 12.38	10,950 15,808	+ 4,858	+44.37
Domohani (Comprising Domohani, Kanthalbāri, Utiarnarichbāri & Utiarnuamari)	NM	Trade & Commerce	1961 1971	18.57 18.57	9,064 7,706	- 1,358	- 14.98
Dhupguri (Comprising Dhupguri, Bairāguri, Uttarbaragari)	NM	Trade & Commerce	1961 1971	14.55 14.55	10,637 16,808	+ 6,171	+ 58.01
Māl	NM	Trade, Commerce & Transport	1961 1971	2.56 2.56	9,085 10,951	+ 1,866	+ 20.54
Falākāta	NM	Trade & Commerce	1961 1971	4.92 4.92	6,413 7,194	+ 781	+ 12.18

M = Municipality
NM = Non-Municipal town

APPENDIX B

Table — 12

A. (1) No. of cases filed for declaring the marriage null & void

- (a) Under the Special Marriages Act 1954
- (b) Under the Hindu Marriages Act 1955

(2) Nullity granted

- (a) Under the Special Marriages Act 1954
- (b) Under the Hindu Marriages Act 1955

B. (1) Number of cases filed for divorce

- (a) Under the Special Marriages Act 1954

1955-56	1960-61	1965-66	1970-71	1973-74
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PEOPLE

97



Table — 12 (concl.d.)

	1955-56	1960-61	1965-66	1970-71	1973-74
(b) Under the Hindu Marriages Act 1955	—	—	3	1	4
(2) Number of divorce granted					
(a) Under the Special Marriages Act 1954	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Under the Hindu Marriages Act 1955	—	—	1	—	—
C. (1) Number of cases filed for judicial separation under the Hindu Marriages Act 1955	—	—	7	11	6
(2) Number of judicial separations granted	—	1	1	2	2



CHAPTER IV

AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION

The economy of the district is mainly based on agriculture. The agricultural production is low and the district is deficient in foodgrains. Tea is the most valuable crop grown in the district, but as its manufacture is a special industry, it will be more convenient to give an account of it in the chapter which relates to the industries of the district, that is, Chapter V. The present chapter will, therefore, be confined to other usual aspects of agriculture. The following table shows the total area and their classification for the three-year period ending 1964-65.

Land Reclamation
and Utilization

Table — 1

LAND UTILIZATION IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1962-65¹

	(Area in thousand acres)		
	1962-63	1963-64	1964-65
Total area of the district	1,519.6	1,519.6	1,519.6
Area under forest	413.3	413.3	413.3
Area not available for cultivation	242.3	241.2	238.5
Other uncultivated land excluding current fallow	117.4	115.9	112.5
Current fallow	23.0	14.8	8.0
Net area sown	723.5	734.4	747.3
Area sown more than once	68.0	86.3	108.1
Total cropped area	791.5	820.7	855.4

There is not much uncultivated land left which may be conveniently utilized for agricultural purpose. The parcels of lands lying here and there throughout the district are mostly barren and can only be brought under cultivation at a cost which cannot be considered economical. Such lands have been shown in the above table as 'area not available for cultivation'. Lands cultivated in the previous year but left non-cropped in the subsequent year have been shown in the table as 'other uncultivated land excluding current fallow'. The practice of keeping the lands fallow for a season or so is an age-old one.

Cultivable waste

¹ Source : Agricultural Economist and *ex-officio* Additional Director of Agriculture, West Bengal.

The settlement of a good number of displaced persons in the days that followed Independence in 1947 coupled with the natural growth of population during the past few decades has made it necessary to take up intensive cultivation in the existing arable lands by the use of chemical manure and by the selection of improved seeds. In 1944-45, it was possible to find out the extent of culturable waste land blocks of 100 acres and above in the district as a result of plot to plot enumeration. Table 2 in the Appendix gives an idea of the results obtained.

While some of these lands have been brought under cultivation after Independence, the major portion of the lands have not been found suitable for extensive cultivation for reasons which are mainly economical. In this connection it has been said, "The most striking features of recent years are the spread of cultivation in the Western Duars and the increase in the jute, in some parts of the district at the expense of the *aus* rice crop. ... In the permanently settled parganas of the district most of the available land is under cultivation and there is not much room for extension." This means that even in the first decade of the present century there was not enough scope for utilization of lands lying scattered in blocks in the district. The country west of Tistā presents a slightly undulating expanse of level paddy fields and scrub jungle broken only by the groves of bamboos, betel-nut, palms and fruit trees, which surround the homesteads of the farmers and *jotedars*. The largest area of cultivation in the Western Duars is the tract between Dalgaon and Fālākātā, the crop being mainly dependent on the bounty of nature.

IRRIGATION

Irrigation facilities: rivers

The rainfall is heavy during the period from May to September, while there is very little rainfall during the remaining part of the year. This means that for at least seven months of the year the district is dependent on artificial irrigation for production of crops. The river system is not very helpful as an aid to irrigation and unless the four or five unpredictable rivers, such as, the Tistā, the Torsā, the Rāidāk, the Jaldhākā and the Kālajāni are brought under control, it would be difficult to provide assured irrigation facilities in most of the areas of the district. These rivers, especially during the monsoons, bring

¹ J. F. Gruning — *op. cit.*, p. 58.

about sudden onrushes of huge volumes of water and have the tendency to change their course from time to time. While extensive damage and devastation are caused by the flood water of these rivers, the sudden change of their course leads to the destruction of vast areas under cultivation. The damage is caused both by erosion and by deposit of huge quantities of sands on the green fields.

There are no major or medium irrigation projects. Some small irrigation projects, however, have been completed in recent years by the Irrigation and Waterways and the Agriculture Departments. The following table shows the area under irrigation in the district for the five-year period 1963-68.

Types of irrigation in vogue

Table — 3

AREA UNDER IRRIGATION IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1963-68¹
(in thousand acres)

Year	Net area irrigated	Percentage of net area irrigated to net area sown
1963-64	161.9	22.0
1964-65	163.1	21.8
1965-66	166.2	22.2
1966-67	156.0	20.6
1967-68	148.3	19.7

The different sources of irrigation for the year 1969-70 are given below from which it will be seen that the farmers have irrigation arrangement in about 1,65,000 acres.

Table — 4

AREA IRRIGATED FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES IN
JALPAIGURI DISTRICT²

Source of Irrigation	Area irrigated (in acres)	Percentage
Government Canal	10,010	6.1
Private Canal	1,46,490	88.8
Tank	2,530	1.5
Well	5,160	3.1
Other Sources	810	0.5
Total	1,65,000	100.00

¹ Source : Agricultural Economist & ex-officio Additional Director of Agriculture, West Bengal.

² Source : Central Bank of India — *Lead Bank Survey Report : Jalpaiguri District*, Calcutta, 1972, p. 38.

Minor irrigation

The minor irrigation projects may be classified into (i) deep tube-well irrigation, (ii) river pump lift irrigation, (iii) small irrigation schemes and (iv) shallow tube-wells. The table below shows the position of the minor irrigation schemes completed up to 1971-72.

Table — 5

MINOR IRRIGATION SCHEMES IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT¹

Name of scheme	Number of Completed scheme	Area Irrigated (in acres)
Deep Tube-well irrigation	33	330
River pump lift irrigation	1	50
Small Irrigation Schemes	5	750
Shallow Tube-wells	60	500

It may be added that owing to hardness of earth, tube-wells cannot be sunk easily in most of the areas. In places adjacent to rivers, however, ground water supply is available and big diameter wells have been found to be suitable for irrigation purposes. This has been corroborated by a survey carried out by the Geological Survey of India.

In order to undertake a programme of Minor Irrigation and Small Irrigation Schemes it is essential that the river control system be worked out first. Recently, a Master Plan for controlling the Tistā river has been completed by experts of the Government. Tistā Barrage Project is being discussed here briefly.

TISTĀ BARRAGE
PROJECT

The Master Plan has a long history. In the pre-Partition days a project report was prepared for developing irrigation and hydro-electric power by the construction of a dam in the upper reaches of Tistā with a barrage at Domohani and an associated system of canals for irrigation. A fresh project report was prepared by the Government of West Bengal in 1957 envisaging the construction of a storage dam near Goikhola in Dārjiling district about 29 miles from Siliguri on the road to Kālimpong. The reservoir was designed for generation of hydro-electric power and modera-

¹ Loc. cit.

tion of floods. Irrigation would also be possible by the construction of a barrage near Domohani. The Central Water and Power Commission was of opinion that this project report of 1957 was based on limited data. So they prepared a more detailed project report for linking the Gaṅgā with the Brahmaputra after collecting extensive hydrological, soil and ground survey data. This scheme was intended to provide irrigation for nearly 3 million acres and was estimated to cost Rs. 357 crores. As it would be difficult to obtain the necessary funds at once it was decided by the Government of West Bengal to obtain the benefits of irrigation, power, navigation and flood control by gradually phasing out the components of the project. The first phase was estimated to cost Rs. 64.66 crores of which Rs. 25 crores might be provided in the Fifth Five Year Plan. This first phase would provide irrigation for 5.86 lakh acres in the West Dinājpur district and 1.64 lakh acres in the Purniā district of Bihār, that is, benefit for 7.5 lakh acres in all. In the subsequent phases it would be possible to irrigate 5.3 lakh acres in the districts of Jalpāiguri and Koch Bihār.

The greater part of the district is covered with alluvium ranging from pure sand to clay. In most parts of the district the soil is a sandy loam, but in the basin between the Tistā and Jaldhākā rivers it is hard, black and clayey. This part of the land provides good pastures and crops of tobacco. In the uplands to the north of the Duārs the soil is a ferruginous clay which is well suited to the growth of the tea plant. The Western Duārs contains numerous old river beds which have been deserted by the streams once flowing on them and near the hills these river beds are strewn with stones and boulders; lower down they contain gravel and, in the plains, sand. These deserted river beds are unprofitable wastes where nothing can be grown. The largest cultivated area in this region is the tract between Dalgāon and Fālākātā where fields of rice and mustard can be found in the vicinity of the villages. The important crops in the district are paddy, jute, tobacco, mustard seed, sugarcane and wheat. Rice is the principal crop of the district. Three varieties, *āus*, *āman*, and *boro*, are grown. So far as fruits are concerned, pineapples are of some importance while bananas and arecanuts are also grown in abundance. Pulses like *musur*, *mug*, *gram*, *māskalāi*, *khesūri* and *araha*r and oilseeds like mustard

AGRICULTURE
INCLUDING
HORTICULTURE

Cropping Pattern

are also grown. In 1971-72, the area under high-yielding varieties was only about 20,000 acres, the crops grown in this area being paddy (*āus* and *āman*) and wheat. It may be added here that more than ninety per cent of the total cropped area in the district is covered by rice and jute. The following table gives the distribution of the crops in 1970-71¹ except tea which is dealt with in the Chapter on Industry.²

Table — 6

Crops	Area (in '000 acres)	Production (in 1,000 tons)
Paddy		
<i>Āus</i>	160.6	69.0
<i>Āman</i>	484.2	221.0
<i>Boro</i>	0.3	0.2
Jute	104.1	268.6*
Wheat	2.5	1.1
Barley	1.5	0.5
Maize	6.8	2.4
Pulses	3.0	0.7
Mustard	5.6	1.2
<i>Mestā</i>	Not available	7.7*
Potato	5.8	10.7
Sugarcane	0.8	16.0
Ginger	0.2	0.4
Tobacco	1.0	0.2
Pineapples	0.5	3,850.0+

Rice

There are two main crops of rice, the *āman* or *haimantik* which is reaped in winter and the *āus* or *bhādoi* which is harvested in August and September. *Āman* rice is the most important crop and the farmer naturally takes a keen interest in its cultivation. *Āman* rice is first sown broadcast in nurseries in May and June and from about the middle of July to the middle of September is transplanted into fields which have been specially prepared for it. The young plants are put into the ground by hand, two or

¹ Central Bank of India — *op. cit.*, p. 51.

² In 1975-76, the acreages covered by wheat, *āman* paddy, *āus* paddy and jute were respectively 57,981; 4,57,117; 1,18,112; and 28,170.

* Denotes unit in terms of 1,000 bales of 200 kgs. each.

+ Denotes unit in terms of 1,000 numbers.

three together, at intervals of six to nine inches. Once the rice has been transplanted nothing more is done except weeding until it is ripe and ready for harvest.

Bhādoi rice is usually grown on higher land locally known as *faringati*. Preparation of the land begins in February; it is ploughed six to eight times and then levelled. The weeds are collected and burnt, the ashes acting as manure to the soil. The seed is then sown broadcast and the land is slightly ploughed up twice and again levelled. When the young plants are about four inches high, the fields are weeded and the crop thinned out with a rake. The outturn of *bhādoi* rice is generally less than that of *āman*.

In the first decade of the present century, the cultivation of jute increased at a rapid rate and the area under this crop was almost doubled in the six years between 1901-02 and 1907-08. The greater part of the increase took place in the Western Duārs. The best variety of jute was that produced in the Rājganj police station. The quality of the fibre was good throughout the district. According to the Settlement Report of 1906-16, the area under jute cultivation was 50,580 acres. The Ishaque Survey of 1944-45 estimated the area under jute as 39,271 acres.¹ The same class of land which is suitable for *bhādoi* rice is also used for growing jute. In the villages the lower part of the jute stalks, which is broken off in order to extract the fibre, is used for fuel; the upper part is used to make fences for protection of crops, such as, tobacco and vegetables which are grown near homesteads.

Jute

Tobacco is an important crop and largely grows in the Western Duārs, the best tobacco lands lying between the Tistā and Torsā rivers. The crop requires careful cultivation and much labour is required to bring the crop to perfection. The crop may be damaged if hailstorms occur in January or February just when the leaves are ready for plucking. The crop is usually grown on good *faringati* land situated near the homestead of the farmer. The fields have to be kept well weeded and the crop requires constant attention until the leaves are ready for plucking in February and March.

Tobacco

From figures furnished by the District Agriculture Office, Jalpāiguri, it is found that in 1964-65 the maximum yield per acre of *āman* paddy was 18 maunds and it was 12 maunds in case of *āus* paddy. The maximum per acre yield of wheat for

Per acre yield of different crops

¹ A. Mitra — Census : 1951 : *West Bengal District Handbook, Jalpaiguri*, Calcutta, pp. cxi-cxii.

the same year was 10 maunds and it was 200 maunds in case of potato. The statement below gives an idea of per acre yield of different crops in various Development Blocks for the year 1964-65.

Table — 7

PER ACRE PRODUCTION OF DIFFERENT CROPS :
1964-65¹

Name of Block	(in maunds)					
	<i>Āman</i> paddy	<i>Āus</i> paddy	Wheat	Mustard	Jute*	Potato
Jalpāiguri	10	8	6	5	1.75	80
Rājganj	10	8	5	5	—	100
Maynāguri	13	—	9	6	—	45
Dhupguri	15	10	8	8	3.21	60
Māl	13.5	8.5	Nil	8	2.7	50
Mātiāli	16	8	Nil	9	2.42	30
Nāgrākātā	17	9	9	4	1.80	50
Mādārihāt	12	6	10	11	2.00	75
Kālchini	18	12	3	3	2.21	90
Fālākātā	15	8	8	5	3.37	200
Ālipur Duār-I	11.5	10	6	6	2.7	60
Ālipur Duār-II	12	10	6	6	2.8	50
Kumārgrām	18	10	3	2.5	2.25	65

Traditional implements are still in use in the district though cultivators are gradually becoming aware of improved agricultural practices. The traditional implements in common use among the cultivators include *hāl* or wooden plough; *phāl* or ploughshare; *koḍāli* or spade; *kurāli* or hatchet for splitting wood; *dāo*, a large knife; *khursha* or *dhelābhāṅgā*, a wooden mallet for breaking up clods of earth; a bamboo harrow for levelling the fields, etc. A set of these implements, together with a pair of bullocks are required by the cultivator to plough his land. To help the farmers to adopt improved practices in agriculture, the Agriculture Department has produced several improved implements, such as, the seed-drill, wheel-hoe, paddy-weeder, mould-board plough and seed-dresser. Their uses are still not widespread. The farming methods and practices in this district are still primitive.

¹ Source : District Agronomist & *ex-officio* Additional Director of Agriculture, Jalpāiguri.

* Jute production is shown in terms of bales, each bale being 400 lbs.

The total area under cultivation is about 7.85 lakh acres. There are about 1,00,500 agricultural families, the average land holding per family being about 7.76 acres. In most of the areas only one crop, i.e., paddy is raised while there are only a few pockets where two crops are grown.

Improved seed is one of the important inputs which can increase agricultural production to a great extent. Moreover, the success of fertilizer and the plant protection programme depend a good deal upon the quality of seed. In order to augment agricultural production, the Agriculture Department of the State Government has made arrangements for distribution of better seeds amongst the farmers through the Block Development Offices. Normally, the foundation seeds produced in the farms are given to registered growers for multiplication and the multiplied seeds are purchased by Government for subsequent distribution amongst other cultivators in the following year. For storing seeds procured from the cultivators, seed farms have been constructed, the particulars of which are given below:

Seeds

Table — 8

BLOCK SEED FARMS IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT

Location of the Block Seed Farm	Period of Construction (Plan period)	Size of the farm (in acres)
Māl	Second Plan	25.85
Ālipur Duār	..	27.88
Fālākātā	..	27.42
Dhupguri	..	25.05
Kumārgrām	..	26.33
Nāgrākātā	Third Plan	25.00
Mādārihāt	..	26.25
Mātiāli	..	24.26
Kālchini	..	26.10

For storing the seeds procured from the cultivators, seed stores having a capacity to store 1,000 maunds of seeds were constructed in the Block areas.

¹ Source : Agricultural Economist & *ex-officio* Additional Director of Agriculture, Government of West Bengal.

Manures

The manures in general use are cow-dung, oil-cakes, black mud of tanks and hide salt. Cow-dung is used for all kinds of crops except pulses. Castor oil and mustard oil-cakes are applied for potatoes, sugarcane, ginger and cabbages. Green manuring is known to a small extent.

Fertilizer

Under the fertilizer distribution schemes of the Government, fertilizers are made available at the nearest rail head and from there the fertilizers are removed by distributors of the depots for sale to cultivators. Chemical fertilizers are used only by progressive farmers. The statement below shows the consumption of fertilizers for the year 1965-66 (upto 14 February 1966).

Table — 9

CONSUMPTION OF FERTILIZERS IN JALPĀIGURI
DISTRICT (1965-66)¹

Name of fertilizer	Consumption (in tonnes)
Ammonium Sulphate	72
Urea	136
Calcium ammonium nitrate	72
Ammonium phosphate	NIL

Crop rotation

According to the seasons, the cultivation of the district may be divided into three distinct parts; the farmers are busy with the first crop during the period from February to June while between July and November they work for the second crop. The third crop keeps them engaged for the period from November to February. In the first crop, mainly jute and *āus* paddy are grown. The second crop is mainly *āman* paddy and in the third crop wheat, vegetables and potato are grown.

Agricultural diseases and pests

Agricultural diseases and pests damage a good portion of the crops if proper care is not taken to protect them. The pests affecting the main crops are named in the following statement.

Crop	Pests
Paddy	Rice hispa, rice steam-borer, rice-bug, swarming caterpillar, ear-cutting caterpillar, paddy-leaf roller, paddy grasshopper, paddy mealy bug and termite.

¹ A short note on Agricultural Development in West Bengal published by the Department of Agriculture & Community Development, Government of West Bengal, Calcutta, 1966, p. 68.

Jute	Hairy caterpillar, jute semilooper, jute apion, indigo caterpillar, jute ring pest, jute mite, jute beetle and termite.
Potato	Cut worm, mile cricket, aphid and tuber moth borers, beetle and mealy bug.
Mustard	Aphid.
Sugarcane	White ant, short borer, top borer, leaf hopper and termite.
Fruits	Mango hopper, mealy bug and Citrus leaf miner.

Assistance to farmers is given by the State Government in the form of agricultural, cattle purchase and fertilizer purchase loans. The amounts so distributed during the three-year period 1969-72 are shown in the following table.

State assistance to agriculture

Table — 10

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS FROM 1969-70 to 1971-72¹

Period	Agricultural loan (Rs.)	Cattle Purchase loan (Rs.)	Fertilizer loan (Rs.)
1969-70	5,01,000	21,01,000	1,83,000
1970-71	1,79,300	1,44,300	1,64,830
1971-72	1,29,000	47,500	2,00,749

The Co-operative Societies help the farmers through credit supply, distribution of fertilizers, quality seeds and pesticides, procurement of pumping sets, etc. Besides short-term credit for seasonal operations, long-term loans involving large amounts are also advanced by them for making permanent improvement of land, repayment of old dues and consolidation of scattered holdings. The marketing co-operatives, besides helping in transactions of agricultural produce, provide credit facilities on pledge of goods. The Barnes Large Sized Co-operative Agricultural Marketing Society Ltd. has been working as the Central Co-operative Marketing Society of the district in addition to its normal functions. It gets supply of agricultural inputs and implements from the West Bengal State Co-operative Marketing Federation Ltd. on behalf of all other Co-operative Societies of the district under a co-ordinated programme and arrange regular and timely supplies to them as per their requirements for distribution to cultivators. The Barnes Large Sized Co-operative

Co operative Societies

¹ Source : Deputy Commissioner, Jalpaiguri.

Agricultural Marketing Society Ltd. also distributes agricultural inputs and implements directly to the cultivators of its areas. An account of the functioning of the local agricultural societies and Large Sized Co-operative Agricultural Marketing Societies has been given in Chapter VI. It may be mentioned that during the Second Plan Period, 11 Large Sized Credit Societies and 30 Service Co-operatives were organized and the Jalpāiguri Central Co-operative Bank was also reorganized when Government participation in the share capital of the Large Sized Credit Societies and the Central Co-operative Bank took place.

Activities of the
Agriculture
Department

During the First and Second Plan periods the agricultural set-up at the district level was strengthened and more powers were given to the District Agricultural Officer and the Block Development Officers for speedy execution of the various schemes. In recent years, arrangements for distribution of better seeds amongst the farmers through the Block Department Officers were made and depots were also opened in remote villages to supply various kinds of chemical fertilizers. The district was not included in the High Yielding Variety Programme (1966-67) of the State in the beginning but later experiments were made with the High Yielding Variety seeds. Brochures in Bengali language published by the State Agriculture Department were circulated among the farmers explaining the techniques of the cultivation of the High Yielding Variety. Recently, several demonstrations of High Yielding Variety (HYV) paddy and wheat cultivation have been sponsored by Government. The use of HYV seeds are gradually becoming popular among farmers.

Farmers are being encouraged to undertake large-scale plantation of pineapple and arecanut. The district has made little progress in adopting the modern techniques of mechanized farming. Only a few tractors and trailers can be seen which are mainly used for agricultural work in Government farms.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY
AND FISHERIES

Fodder crops

The fodder crops grown in the district are not sufficient to meet the demand of the cattle stock. *Jowar*, maize, *bajra* and napier grass are usually included in the fodder crops. In the early part of the present century, fodder problem was not acute as will be evident from the following extract from the Gazetteer of 1911: "Pasturage is abundant; in the north *taluks* of the

Western Duars green fodder is always available and paddy straw is not used for cattle. ... In the regulation *parganas* and in the southern *taluks* of the Western Duars straw is stored for fodder and cattle are fed on it while the *aman* rice is growing and they cannot be allowed to graze in the fields."¹ This position was, however, changed with the passing of years and fodder cultivation was later considered essential for healthy growth of the cattle stock. After Independence several schemes were initiated by the Animal Husbandry Department of the State Government for the development of fodder crops. Fodder seeds and cuttings were supplied to the farmers from the office of the District Live-stock Officer. The following statement gives an idea of the fodder development schemes implemented in recent years.

Table — 11

FODDER DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES : 1969-73²

Year	Quantity of fodder seeds and cuttings distributed (in Kilograms)	Number of fodder demonstrations held in farmer's own plot
1969-70	1,343	Nil
1970-71	1,325	4
1971-72	Nil	4
1972-73	475	27
1973-74	not available	25

Piggery development work has been taken up by the Animal Husbandry Department of the State Government recently. There is one scheme for introduction of improved breeding practices in the local stocks of pigs. Under this scheme, boars of an exotic breed, such as, Large White, Land Race or their crosses produced at the Regional Pig Breeding Station-cum-Bacon Factory at Haringhata are distributed to selected pig keepers in selected areas to bring about an upgraded stock which would be then utilized for manufacture of pork products in a bacon factory. In order to help the pig keepers to have recourse to this programme, boars are supplied on payment of Rs. 10 only per boar. For the maintenance of each boar, an amount of Rs. 15 is also granted.

Piggery develop-
ment scheme

¹ J. F. Gruning — *op. cit.*, p. 63.

² Source : Director of Animal Husbandry, West Bengal.

State Poultry Farm

For the development of poultry industry in the State, one State Poultry Farm was established at Mohitnagar with 500 layers during the Second Plan period. Owing to increased demand for eggs as well as chicks, the farm was expanded with 1,500 layers during the year 1966. The production of eggs up to September 1973 numbered 27,137. The number of chicks sold up to July 1973 was 982.

Poultry Extension Centre

During the Second Plan period one Poultry Extension Centre was set up at Maynāguri with laying strength of 100 birds. This Centre has since been converted into a hatchery to supply quality chicks to villagers so that poultry units could be set up through private initiative.*

Measures to improve breeds

The local cattle are small and weak. During the Second and Third Plan periods the programme for improvement of cattle was taken up in areas under the police stations of Dhupguri, Fālākātā, Kumārgrām and Ālipur Duār. Improved bulls of the Haryana breed were distributed to progressive cultivators or cattle owners in a compact area in the ratio of 1 bull in 100 cows and mature heifers. In 1960, there were 86 Haryana bulls in the district and simultaneously all the *deshi* or scrub bulls were castrated or eliminated from the compact area where improved bulls have been distributed.

Veterinary Aid

Before the launching of the First Five Year Plan, only two veterinary units had been functioning in the district under the control of the local bodies. At that time, treatment of animals and epidemic control were the main activities of these two units located at Jalpāiguri and Ālipur Duār. These two units also worked during the First Five Year Plan period without having any appreciable change in the mode of working. During the Second Five Year Plan, these two existing units were provincialized and converted into hospitals. Six Block Veterinary dispensaries and five Aid centres were also established. Seven more Block Veterinary dispensaries, three Aid centres and two Artificial Insemination centres were later established during the Third Plan period. Veterinary aid is extended to the live-stock owners through the State Veterinary hospitals in urban areas, while veterinary aid is extended to the owners of live-stock in the rural areas chiefly through the Block Veterinary dispensaries and Aid centres. The following statement shows the number of cases treated at these veterinary institutions for the five-year period 1966-71.

* Source : Director of Animal Husbandry, West Bengal.

Table — 12

Year	Number of cases treated
1966-67	14,101
1967-68	16,211
1968-69	38,093
1969-70	28,561
1970-71	40,673

Electric therapy in animals has been introduced in the veterinary Hospital at Jalpāiguri.

Artificial Insemination centres are attached to Jalpāiguri and Ālipur Duār hospitals. The number of artificial insemination performed in these centres during 1967-68 was 1,232, while the number for 1968-69 was 1,276.¹ Mass vaccination to eradicate common contagious diseases among cattle, mainly Rinderpest, foot and mouth diseases, haemorrhagic septicaemia, anthrax, is carried out when there is threat of an epidemic. Rinderpest being a very common contagious disease, mass inoculation against it was performed on a comparatively large scale during the past few years as may be seen from the table below.

Artificial Insemination Centres

Table — 13

MASS VACCINATION AGAINST RINDERPEST ²	
Year in which performed	Number of vaccination
1966-67	56,660
1967-68	61,500
1968-69	72,536
1969-70	19,724
1970-71	21,055

The State Veterinary hospitals are located at Jalpāiguri and Ālipur Duār. The number of Block dispensaries in the rural areas was 13 in 1973-74. The number of Aid centres and additional Aid centres during the same period was 16. Adequate steps are also taken against poultry diseases, such as, Ranikhet disease, fowl pox and fowl cholera. The number of mass vaccination against Ranikhet disease for a number of years is given below.

Table — 14

NUMBER OF MASS VACCINATION AGAINST RANIKHET DISEASES : 1966-71 ³	
Year	Number of vaccination
1966-67	44,762
1967-68	52,872
1968-69	51,796
1969-70	24,393
1970-71	30,736

^{1,3} Source : District Veterinary Officer, Jalpāiguri.

Preventive measures were taken to tackle the growth of nondescript cattle mainly through castration. The number of castrations in 1964-65 was 305, while the figures for 1966-67 and 1970-71 were 395 and 275 respectively.

A Veterinary Assistant Surgeon is attached to each Development Block. He is assisted by two Veterinary Field Assistants. Each Veterinary Aid centre, usually lying in the interior, has one Veterinary Field Assistant. The Veterinary Assistant Surgeon aided by his Field Assistants treats cases both at Block head-quarters as also in the remote rural areas. Besides undertaking preventive mass vaccination of animals and birds, they advise villagers on such subjects as improvement of cattle and poultry stocks. The District Veterinary Officer during his monthly tours inspects all veterinary hospitals, dispensaries, aid centres and peripatetic service centres and gives advice on technical matters.

The table below gives statistics of live-stock and poultry in the district for the year 1966.¹

Live-stock
Statistics

Table — 15

<i>Cattle</i>	Cows	1,58,269
	Bulls & bullocks	1,51,442
	Young stock	1,55,448
		<hr/> 4,65,159
<i>Buffaloes</i>	Cows	4,572
	Bulls & bullocks	27,958
	Young stock	15,438
		<hr/> 47,968
	Sheep	8,576
	Goats	1,81,197
	Horses & ponies	700
	Pigs	3,333
	Others	131
		<hr/> 92,107
		3,89,075
<i>Poultry</i>	Fowls	<hr/>
	Ducks	4,81,182

¹ Source : Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Government of West Bengal.

FISHERIES

Jalpāiguri is not an important fish growing district. The existing tanks, *khāls*, *bils* and rivers offer a very limited quantity of fish. Normally, the fish available in the district are small in size, though some small quantities of fish of a larger variety are found in the local fish markets during the rainy season. There are very few families who live solely by fishing. Rājbanśis, Muslims, Meches and Nepālis catch fish in addition to their other occupations. Mahseer fishing used to be particularly good in the higher reaches of the Jaldhākā, Torsā, Rāidāk and Sankosh rivers. In the early fifties the Jalpāiguri Duārs Games Association did some creditable work to preserve fisheries from indiscriminate destruction.

Fish is generally brought dead to the market, except such fish as *Koi*, *Māgur* or *Singi* which can live for a long time on a little water. There is no arrangement for cold-storage of fish, but ice as used for preserving them for a short period. Several schemes were taken up by the Directorate of Fisheries, West Bengal for developing fisheries, but the progress in this respect so far has not been very encouraging.

FORESTRY

Forests cover more or less an area of 4,35,000 acres in Jalpāiguri district which means that about one fourth of the area of the district is covered by forests. While the forests are numerous and valuable, the major portion of the forest area is administered as reserved forest by the Forest Department of the State Government. In addition to the reserved forests, which are situated entirely in the Western Duārs between Tistā and Sankosh rivers, there is a large forest on the east of Tistā, which formerly belonged to the Baikunthapur Rāj Estate. It vested to the State Government under the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act and came under the control of the Forest Department on 26th May 1956. This forest appears to be a striking example of what a magnificent *śāl* forest looks like after decades of poor management and improper treatment. Only six per cent of the forests in the district lies in the hills, the rest being in the plains.

The striking feature of the forests are the valuable forests of *śāl* (*Shorea robusta*), the quality of *śāl* forests in the district being better than that found in any other part of India. These forests have been broadly classified as Moist Tropical forests. A broad description of forest areas has been given in Chapter I.

Forest produce

The forest produces play an important role in the economy of the district. The principal timber tree is *śāl* and its importance is so great that the working of all reserved forests is directed *inter alia* towards obtaining a maximum quantity of mature timber from it. In some parts it grows nearly pure, but it is very often mixed with a large number of other species. While *śāl* is the most economically important species found in these forests, other valuable species, such as, *champ*, *malagiri*, *tun*, *sissoo*, *khair*, *gamar* find a ready sale at a good price. Railway sleepers of various sizes are sawn mostly by purchasers for supply to the Railways. During the last few decades, various species of commercial importance were introduced and of these teak occupies some areas. Plywood is gaining popularity and the species like *chilaune*, *champ*, *chikrase*, *tun*, *gamar*, *bahera*, etc. are used for the manufacture of tea-chests, and as materials for box-planking in the orange trade, *simul*, *odal*, *maina*, *dabdabe* are mainly used. Suitable species for the match-wood industry are scarce.

Firewood demand of the tea gardens and of the local population is met, as far as practicable, from dry fallen wood and also from tops and branches of annual fellings. Apart from this, house posts, thatch and other minor produce are also obtained from the forests. There is a great demand for canes for basketmaking. In recent years, there has been a demand for *sarpagandhā* (*Rawalfia serpentine*).

Local labour is scarce in the forest area. In order to have the services of a regular labour force for carrying out different types of works in the forests, forest villages have been established in different places with adequate number of labourers. The total area of land allotted to each household for homestead and cultivation is about 2.5 acres. Temporary or permanent huts are provided for each household.

In 1960-61, the gross annual revenue from the district forest produce was Rs. 30,32,770, the net revenue being Rs. 24,20,864¹. The annual yield for the same period is given in the following table.

¹ Source : Divisional Forest Officer, Jalpāiguri.

Table — 16

Kinds of forest produce	Quantity (in tons)
Timber in round	21,604
Timber in the form of sleeper	4,200
Timber in the form of plywood	834
Timber in other forms (match-wood, etc.)	1,335
House posts, poles, plough pieces, etc.	906
Firewood	59,348

Besides the above forest produce, canes and other minor forest produce valued at Rs. 64,539 were also obtained during the period referred to above. The outturn of forest products for the three-year period 1965-68 is shown below.

Table — 17

OUTTURN OF FOREST PRODUCTS IN JALPĀIGURI
DISTRICT : 1965-68¹
(in '000 cubic feet)

Kinds of forest produce	1965-66	1966-67	1967-68
Timber	26,52,100	23,03,401	47,709
Fuel	70,05,266	70,47,578	1,46,969

Of the earlier floods mention may be made of the disastrous floods of 1787 when the Tistā river, which used to flow into the Gaṅgā, suddenly deserted its channel and turned its waters into a still more ancient bed by which it empties itself into the Brahma-putra in the Rangpur district (now in Bāṅglādes̄h). There were serious floods caused by the swelling of the river Tistā in 1881 and 1892. The details of damage caused by these floods are not available.

The flood in 1902 was confined to the basin of the Tistā river and was caused by incessant rain in the Dārjiling hills on 27 September of that year. The rainfall at Jalpāiguri during the month of August was above the average and in September more than twice the normal amount of rainfall. Consequently, Tistā was in spate and on September 28 it reached a height of eighteen inches above the highest flood level of the preceding ten years. It remained at its maximum height for about half an hour and

FLOODS, FAMINES
& DROUGHTS

Floods
of 1787

Floods of 1881
and 1892

Flood
in 1902

¹ Source : *Statistics on Industrial Potential* published by the Director of Cottage & Small Scale Industries, Government of West Bengal, Calcutta, 1971.

then began to fall as rapidly as it had risen. Compared to the intensity of the flood, loss of life was not heavy and was confined to places where the rise of water was rapid. The damage done to the crops was not extensive. The winter rice was benefited by the silt deposited by the flood and the standing jute was unharmed while much of the jute which was being steeped was washed away and lost. The loss of cattle was serious. An estimate furnished by the then Deputy Commissioner of the district put the total loss at 350 head of cattle and 20 buffaloes. Some damage was also caused to the railways. The big breach on the Eastern Bengal State Railway took over about ten days to repair. A bridge was washed away on the Jalpāiguri road and another on the Jalpāiguri-Alipur Duār road; elsewhere the road damage was not considerable.

Floods
of 1906

In 1906, the floods were extensive and covered almost the whole district. Heavy and continuous rain fell in July and in the same month 40.50 inches of rainfall was registered in Jalpāiguri. In the past the floods were caused by sudden downpours of rain lasting a short time, while the feature of 1906 was the long succession of rainy and sunless days. On the night of August and morning of August 4, all the rivers and streams in the district rose simultaneously and the damage done to railways and roads was enormous. By the morning of August 4 much of the town was flooded by the rapid rise of the river Tistā. The water rushed through the compound of the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow, and across the road into the compound of the Circuit House where it was over two feet deep. The court buildings were surrounded by water and at one time it looked as though some of the temporary buildings would fall. Near the Officers' Club the houses were standing in water and the Superintendent of Police had to spend the whole morning rescuing women and children in the police lines and taking them to his own house for safety. There was no loss of life and the number of cattle drowned was small. Some damage was caused to the *bhādoi* rice crop; the continuous rain delayed the harvest, and in a few instances where the crop was close to the rivers, they were destroyed by the rush of water. The principal damage was, however, to communications; every railway and every road of importance in the district were breached. The rain was so heavy and incessant that the work of restoring communications was delayed. During the first 20 days of August not one day passed without rain, the amount of rain registered at Jalpāiguri in this period being 48.96 inches and at Alipur Duār 50.28 inches.

The complete breakdown of railway and roads made the position in parts of the Duārs very serious. Nāgrākātā and all the tea gardens to the east of it became dependent on the Rāmshāi Hāt railway station for their supplies of rice and coal and for movement of tea. The traffic on the Rāmshāi Hāt-Sulkāpārā and Rāmshāi Hāt-Gayerkātā roads being very heavy, efforts were made to keep these roads passable for traffic. Boats were also used for rescue operations over the Jaldhākā and Dāinā rivers.

Floods were caused by rains and swelling of rivers on several occasions in the thirties and the forties when prompt and adequate measures were taken by the Government, District Board, private organizations and individuals to relieve distress. The cultivators were advanced agricultural loans to enable them to cultivate their lands, while house building grants were also given in deserving cases to rebuild mud or thatched houses.

In 1950, a heavy flood in the river Tistā came in the middle of June and partly inundated 56 *mouzas* under police stations Maynāguri and Māl, as also three wards of Jalpāiguri Municipality. The number of families affected by the flood was 4,135, while the number of cattle lost was 3,163. About 25,400 maunds of foodgrains were lost and 1,171 houses were damaged. The standing crop of 592 acres of jute and 562 acres of *āus* were lost. A large forest in the bed of the Tistā was almost wiped away.

Flood
of 1950

In 1952, there was heavy rainfall in Jalpāiguri and there were two floods at an interval of three months, one in July and the other in September. The flood in the month of July caused about 86 breaches in roads and railways including severe damage to six bridges. The September flood caused some damage to agricultural lands and mud hutments. Assistance in the form of loans and grants was given to the affected persons.

Flood
of 1952

The flood of 1968 was devastating, affecting 420 sq. miles of the district. The Tistā embankment of Jalpāiguri town was breached. It was so sudden that the people had little time to escape to a safer zone. The flood water inundated at least 90 villages under 6 police stations, the total number of persons affected being 4,25,000. At night when the people had been sleeping, the heavy onrush of water and very quick rise of water level made the people bewildered and immediate rescue work was impossible. Altogether, 1,975 persons died and the number of cattle lost was 56,958. The number of houses damaged or destroyed was 41,400, the money value of these houses being

Flood
of 1968

estimated at Rs. 917.76 lakhs. About 1,08,300 acres of cropped area was affected and the extent of loss in terms of money was estimated to be Rs. 254.97 lakhs. Naturally, it took a long time for the district to recover from this havoc.

Famines

Famines are rare in the district, though until 1905 the district was included among those liable to famine. The Bengal Famine of 1866-67 hardly affected the district though export of rice to distressed areas elsewhere resulted in the rise of local price of rice to about double the ordinary rates. In 1873-74, there was slight distress in those parts of the district which border on Dinājpur, Rangpur, and Purniā, but no relief measures were called for. Owing to the fact that the district is bounded on the north throughout its entire length by the Himālayan Range, it is very improbable that either the local rainfall, or the supply of water brought down by the rivers and streams would be inadequate even when the severest drought which might occur elsewhere. According to available statistics, the total number of droughts in a period of 60 years from 1891 to 1950 was only 5, the years being 1891, 1896, 1900, 1930 and 1942.¹



¹ A. Mitra — *District Census Handbook : Jalpaiguri*, Calcutta, 1951, p. 120.

APPENDIX

ABSTRACT OF CULTURABLE WASTE LAND BLOCKS OF 100 ACRES
AND ABOVE IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1944-45¹

Table—2

Scattered plots below 100 acres		100 acres and above to below 500 acres		500 acres and above to below 1,000 acres		1,000 acres and above to below 5,000 acres		5,000 acres and above	
No. of blocks	Area in acres	No. of blocks	Area in acres	No. of blocks	Area in acres	No. of blocks	Area in acres	No. of blocks	Area in acres
—	1,99,111	117	22,243	2	1,275	—	—	—	2,22,629

¹ H. S. M. Ishaque — *Agricultural Statistics by Plot to Plot Enumeration in Bengal 1944-45, Part I*, 1946, p. 120.

CHAPTER V

INDUSTRIES

The most important industry in the district is the manufacture of tea which has been described in its various aspects in a separate section in the second half of this chapter. The other industries of the district are of minor importance in comparison with tea.

OLD-TIME INDUSTRIES

Weaving of gunny cloth of a very coarse quality called *dhokrā* and striped cloth called *phota* made mainly of jute may be mentioned as old-time industries. These are still manufactured for home consumption. But the industry is in a decaying stage as there is at present little demand for these products. The cultivation of *eri* from worms grown on the castor oil plants and the weaving of *eri chādar* by the tribal community may also be regarded as one of the old-time industries. But this industry has also lost its importance as the tribal people engaged in this industry have taken up other types of gainful employment in recent years.

RISE OF NEW INDUSTRIES

Many types of small-scale and cottage industries found in the district are of recent origin. They are rice and oil milling, wheat and spices grinding, stone-crushing, saw-mills, automobile workshops, engineering workshops, carpentry, hosiery, leather works, bakery, making of steel trunks, manufacture of candles, brick and tiles, suitcase making, *biḍi* making, pottery, toy making, cane and bamboo works, clay modelling, tea-chest manufacturing, etc.

There is no hydroelectric or thermal power station in the district. Electricity is the main source of power and this is supplied by the West Bengal State Electricity Board. Electricity is supplied from the Jaldhākā Hydel Project in the district of Dārjiling, Jalpāiguri Diesel Station, Koch Bihār Diesel Station and small diesel stations at Māl and Bīrpārā in Jalpāiguri and Chāngrābāndhā in Koch Bihār.

The district suffers from acute shortage of electric power. The bulk of the power received from the State Electricity Board is consumed for domestic purposes. On account of the scarcity of power, the scope of development of small-scale industries in

the district is limited. Most of the tea gardens have their own power generating plants.

Jalpāiguri town was electrified by a private licensee. This licence was revoked by the State Government on 19 February 1971. Since then the State Electricity Board has taken over the responsibility of supplying power to the town. The generating station at Jalpāiguri belonging to the licensee and having a capacity of 850 KW was taken over by the Board. Since the take-over, some improvement in the system has been made. Eleven KV distribution lines were drawn from Oodlābāri, Bānārhat, Bīrpārā and Hamiltonganj Sub-stations for bulk supply to 10 tea gardens, Jalpāiguri Engineering College and to Defence Department of Hāsimārā and Jaigāon, besides supply to Government of Bhutān at Samchi and Phuntsoling.

Owing to damage of the Jaldhākā Hydel Plant during the natural calamities of 1968, restriction on use of power was imposed by the State Government. The third generating unit at Jaldhākā with a capacity of 9 MW was commissioned on 25 November 1972. With the availability of more power it was possible to withdraw power restriction totally. Ālipur Duār 66 KV Sub-station was commissioned and the 11 KV distributing mains were connected with the said Sub-station for improved power flow at Ālipur Duār and the neighbouring areas. A 33 KV line was drawn from Mohitnagar to Maynāguri to link up with Bīrpārā-Maynāguri system for further flexibility of power supply to Jalpāiguri. Fourteen rural areas like Dakshin Oodlābāri, Shishujhumra and Bhotepatti were electrified in 1972-73.

As the generating capacity of the Jaldhākā plant is limited to 12 MW for the present, arrangement has been made by the SEB to import 5 MW from the Assam State Electricity Board. About 25 km. of 132 KV line has been drawn from the Assam border to Ālipur Duār. A 132 KV Sub-station has been set up at Ālipur Duār to receive power from the Assam State Electricity Board and to feed the same to the Jaldhākā network. The construction work in respect of the Jaldhākā Stage-II scheme for additional power of 8 MW was started in May 1973. While installation of two 750 KVA diesel generating sets at Bīrpārā is in progress for obtaining additional power, a 66 KV transmission line is proposed to be drawn from Siliguri to Mohitnagar near Jalpāiguri to meet the future power requirement of the area.

In order to boost power supply at Jalpāiguri town, the SEB has recently sanctioned a Master Plan involving an expenditure

Rural Electrification work

of Rs. 14.82 lakhs. The scheme envisages setting up several distribution Sub-stations and drawing of high, low and medium voltage distributing mains within the town and its outskirts.

Up to 31 March 1965 only two towns and 16 villages were electrified in the district.

After a time-lag the SEB sanctioned a scheme for electrification of 16 villages in Jalpāiguri and Maynāguri police stations at a cost of Rs. 7.71 lakhs. Of these, three villages were electrified in 1972-73. Work in respect of 9 villages has recently been completed, while the remaining 7 villages are expected to be electrified by the end of 1974. A separate scheme financed by the Rural Electrification Corporation has also been sanctioned for electrification of 62 villages in Māl and Mātiāli police station. The work is likely to be taken up in 1974-75. As on 31 March 1976, 8 towns and 203 villages were electrified. The following table shows the sale of electric energy under different heads in the district for the year 1970-71.¹

Sale of Electricity

SALE OF ELECTRIC ENERGY IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT
(In Kilo Watt Hours)

1. Domestic (Heat & Small Power)	..	16,885
2. Residential (Light & Fan)	..	4,07,655
3. Commercial (Heat & Small Power)	..	59,959
Light & Fan	..	8,92,604
4. Industrial (low & medium voltage)	..	5,05,330
High voltage	..	26,00,659
5. Public Lighting	..	62,694
6. Public water works & sewerage pumping	..	11,996
7. Distributing Licensees	..	3,18,610
8. Total	..	48,76,392
9. No. of Consumers	..	5,274

INDUSTRIES AND MANUFACTURES

There are no mines in the district. The geological formations are composed of a series of rocks which consist of variegated slates, quartzites and dolomites. The dolomitic limestone bands in the Buxā Duārs form the most important mineral deposit in the area. Dolomite is found all along in the hill range from

¹ West Bengal State Electricity Board — *Annual Statistics* (Mimeographed), 1970-71.

near Lapchaco to Rāidāk. The minerals of the district include coal, graphite, lignite, iron ore, copper ore, etc. Coal occurs interbedded with grey carbonaceous sandstone. Lignite can be found in patches throughout the entire length of the west side of Jayanti river. Iron ores, mostly haematite, are locally developed near Gaopata. The ores are of low to medium grade. The lime obtained from dolomite is of good quality and has good tensile strength. Deposits of magnesium sulphate occur at some localities in the foothills region.

Minerals

Cottage and small-scale industries may be classified into major and minor groups. While the major group includes leather and leather products, non-metallic mineral products, basic metal and their products, transport equipment and miscellaneous manufacturing industries, the minor group consists of such industries as cotton cloth weaving in handloom, making of rope and cordage out of jute, manufacture of wooden products, making of baskets and broomsticks, making of clay model, foundry industry, repair of cycle and rickshaw and goldsmithy.

Cottage and small-scale industries

The small industries of the district may be classified under two groups, registered industrial units and unregistered units. The following statement shows the number of registered units with the number of persons engaged in these units for the years 1969 and 1970.

Registered & un-registered industrial units

UNITS REGISTERED WITH THE CHIEF INSPECTOR OF
FACTORIES, WEST BENGAL¹

Year	No. of units	No. of persons employed daily
1969	251	18,980
1970	250	20,357
1975	253	19,900

The following table shows the number of establishments and workers not covered by the Factories Act in 1965-66.

¹ Directorate of Cottage & Small-Scale Industries, West Bengal — *Statistics on Industrial Potential : District Jalpaiguri*, Calcutta, 1971; Government of West Bengal — *Economic Review : 1976-77, 1977*, p. 178.

NO. OF SMALL INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS AND WORKERS IN
JALPAIGURI DISTRICT NOT COVERED BY THE FACTORIES ACT :
1965-66¹

No. of establishments	Percentage in the urban area	No. of workers	Percentage in the urban area	Percentage of establishments to State total	Percentage of workers to State total
9,840	22.4	18,680	23.6	1.72	1.44

Small-scale industries

Some of the important small-scale industries with location are given below.²

Name of Industry	Areas where located
Saw Mill	Lātāguri, Dābgrām, Gayerkātā, Ālipur Duār, Rājābhātkhawa, Nāgrākātā, Damanpur, Hamiltonganj
Carpentry	Jalpāiguri, Ālipur Duār, Maynāguri
Rice & Oil Mill	Jalpāiguri, Maynāguri, Ālipur Duār, Fālākātā, Dhupguri, Gayerkātā Baradighi, Mandalghāt, Mujnai, Sonāpur
Engineering Workshop	Jalpāiguri, Dābgrām, Māl, Maynāguri, Bīrpārā, Gayerkātā
Bricks and Tiles	Jalpāiguri, Gayerkātā, Fālākātā, Ālipur Duār, Maynāguri
Gold and Silversmithy	Jalpāiguri, Ālipur Duār
Bakery	Jalpāiguri, Ālipur Duār, Kāmākhyāguri, Māl
Cane & Bamboo making	Lātāguri, Damanpur, Ālipur Duār, Jalpāiguri
Cotton handloom weaving	Jalpāiguri, Devnagar, Mandalghāt, Sarium, Bhastali, Bālāsundar, Kāmākhyāguri
Eri rearing and reeling	Kāmākhyāguri
Brass & bell-metal	Jalpāiguri, Ālipur Duār
Pottery	Singīmāri, Māl
Steel trunk and suitcase	Jalpāiguri, Ālipur Duār

¹ Directorate of Cottage & Small-Scale Industries, West Bengal — *Statistics on Industrial Potential : District Jalpāiguri*, Calcutta, 1971.

² Source : District Industrial Officer, Murshidabad.

In 1972, the number of registered units was 384, while that of the unregistered units was 10,000. Most of the registered small-scale units are very small with a fixed capital investment not exceeding Rs. 5,000 and employing not more than five persons.¹ A sample survey indicates that about 62 per cent of the registered small-scale units employ 1-5 persons.

Ericulture industry is generally found in the rural areas and particularly in Ālipur Duārs subdivision. Ericulture provides gainful seasonal employment to the agriculturist families. A Training Centre is being run by the State Government at Tāleswarguri in Ālipur Duār police station. The government gives financial assistance, marketing and other facilities to the industry. During the Fourth Plan period, efforts were made to increase the production through greater use of fertilizers, larger financial assistance for irrigation, establishment of graft nurseries and seed station, increasing the supply of healthy eggs and larger assistance for co-operatives. The following statement gives an idea of production and persons employed during the five year period ending 1971-72.

Ericulture
Industry

PRODUCTION OF ERI-EGGS AND NUMBER OF PERSONS EMPLOYED
IN ERICULTURE INDUSTRY IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1967-72²

Year	Total production of eri-eggs (in grams)	No. of persons employed in regular establishments	Average casual labourers engaged in nurseries throughout the year	Employed in village rearing work	Total expenditure (in Rs.)
1967-68	7,036	11	1,190	1,925	27,775
1968-69	5,813	11	1,097	1,279	28,578
1969-70	6,239	14	932	1,295	40,211
1970-71	5,360	14	705	1,290	36,067
1971-72	6,077	14	499	1,140	38,899

Loans under the Bengal State Aid to Industries Act are sanctioned in suitable cases by the State Government, the Director or Additional Director of Industries, West Bengal, registered

Assistance under
State Aid to In-
dustries Act

¹ Source : District Industrial Officer, Murshidabad.

² Source : Central Bank of India — *Lead Bank Survey Report, Jalpāiguri district, Siliguri, 1972, p. 73.*

co-operatives, District Industrial Officer, and Block Development Officers. The table below shows the total figures in respect of loan disbursed to small-scale units by the Block Development Officers for the period from 1969-70 to 1971-72.¹

1969-70		1970-71		1971-72	
Units assisted	Amount disbursed	Units assisted	Amount disbursed	Units assisted	Amount disbursed
	Rs.		Rs.		Rs.
91	35,000	55	16,000	59	20,000

The following table shows the extent of loans disbursed to the small industrial units by the Deputy Commissioner and District Industrial Officer, Jalpāiguri for the period from 1969-70 to 1971-72.

AMOUNT OF LOANS DISBURSED TO SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES
UNITS IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1969-70²

Year	Deputy Commissioner		District Industrial Officer	
	Units assisted	Amount disbursed	Units assisted	Amount disbursed
		Rs.		Rs.
1969-70	1	3,000	21	21,000
1970-71	1	4,000	14	15,000
1971-72	6	30,000	41	42,500

Besides loans, as stated above, the small-scale industrial units can also get financial assistance from the local banks under certain conditions. The banks including the State Bank of India advanced about 78.73 lakhs of rupees to small industrial units of the district as on 31 December 1971.

Almost all the small-scale industries are under proprietary management. There are, however, some units which are run by co-operative societies and are commonly known as industrial co-operatives. In 1963, there were 35 such societies in the district, but these societies mostly failed to function properly.

¹ Source : Central Bank of India — *Lead Bank Survey Report, Jalpāiguri district*, Siliguri, 1972, p. 73.

² *ibid.* p. 75.

At present, only a few of the societies are functioning. It may be added that lack of proper technical guidance and financial difficulties have stood in the way of progress of these societies.

The handloom weavers mostly reside in the Development Blocks of Jalpāiguri, Ālipur Duār I, Ālipur Duār II, Kumārgrām, Rāniganj and Maynāguri. The handloom products include napkins and *śāḍis* of lower counts. In Jalpāiguri Block, however, a few artisans from Tāngāil (in Bānglādesh) have settled and are at present engaged in manufacturing Tāngāil *śāḍis* of finer counts. The following statement shows the various aspects of handloom industry in the district at present.¹

No. of handloom weavers in the district	663
No. of handlooms in the district	.. 339
No. of handloom co-operative societies	.. 23
No. of artisans in the co-operative fold	.. 590
No. of looms in the co-operative fold	.. 436
Total consumption of yarn in the co-operative fold (bales per year)	.. 2,377

The Handloom Development Officer, Koch Bihār looks after the working of the industry in this district.

The West Bengal Finance Corporation with their headquarters in Calcutta have recently established a branch office at Siliguri for supplying raw materials to the small industries operating in different areas of North Bengal. The raw materials which are usually supplied to the small-scale industrial units include aluminium ingot, B.P. Sheet, G.P. Sheet, iron and steel, billets for rolling mills, zinc and paraffin. The number of units which were recommended for supply of raw materials in recent years is given in the following statement.²

Other financial institutions

Year	No. of Units
1969-70	10
1970-71	12
1971-72	18
1972-73	81

¹ Source : District Industrial Officer, Jalpāiguri.

² Deputy Commissioner, Jalpāiguri — *Jalpāiguri 1973*, pp. 110-11.

Assistance to industrial co-operatives

In June 1973 there were altogether 80 industrial co-operatives in the district of which only 18 were actually in working condition. The following statement gives an idea of the working of these societies for the two-year period ending 1972-73.¹

Year	Managerial subsidy		Working capital loan		Government share participation	
	No. of units	Amount	No. of units	Amount	No. of shares	Amount
		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.
1971-72	1	1,200	2	15,000	1	2,500
1972-73	1	1,650	—	—	—	—

Registration of Small-Scale Industrial Units

The progress of work in connection with registration of small-scale industrial units is shown in the following statement.² During the period 1961-62 to 1968-69 the total number of industrial units registered was 288.

Year	No. of units registered
1969-70	43
1970-71	41
1971-72	77
1972-73	223

Manufacture of tea

It has already been stated that the most important industry in the district is the manufacture of tea. Tea was introduced into the Western Duārs from the Dārjiling district, where the industry was first established as a commercial enterprise in 1856. Soon tea gardens were found throughout the north of the district between the Tistā and the Sankosh rivers, wherever the land was not occupied by reserved forests or river beds. The planters' attention was turned to the waste lands of the Western Duārs. In 1874, a garden was opened at Gazaldoba by Richard Haughton, the pioneer of the tea industry in the Jalpāiguri district. It was soon found that the soil and climate of the Western Duārs were very suitable for the growth of tea and soon Government offered land to willing investors on favourable terms and the industry

¹ *loc. cit.*

² *ibid.*, pp. 106-07.

developed rapidly. From D.H.E. Sunder's *Settlement Report* it appears that the tea industry in this district began in 1874-75 and the first leases were issued to 22 gardens in 1877. At the time of preparing the *Settlement Report* there were 182 gardens, in all, growing and manufacturing tea. The total area comprised in them was 1,39,751 acres at that time. Out of this number, only eleven gardens were managed by native companies and individuals and were worked exclusively by native agencies while the remaining gardens were owned by European capitalists mostly in the form of companies. The following table illustrates the growth of tea industry in the district during the period from 1876 to 1907.¹

Year	No. of gardens	Acreage under tea	Outturn of tea (in lbs)
1876	13	818	29,520
1881	55	6,230	10,27,116
1892	182	38,583	1,82,78,628
1901	235	76,403	3,10,87,537
1907	180	81,338	4,51,96,894

Rapid extension of cultivation of tea in these years changed almost completely the physical characteristics of the submontane country over a great area. The greater part of the primeval forest disappeared and mile after mile of the countryside was replaced by tea gardens. The table given above shows that the area under tea nearly doubled between 1892 and 1901, while after this period the extension of cultivation had been comparatively slow.

All the tea gardens are situated in the Western Duārs with the exception of Dānguājhār, a small garden lying at a distance of 4.5 miles (7.2 km.) from the Jalpāiguri town. In 1960, there were 152 tea estates in the district. The number was 151 in 1976.

D.H.E. Sunder's *Settlement Report* of 1895 contains an account of tea cultivation in those days. According to this account, the tea plant (*Thea Sinensis*) is raised from seed which is sown in November or December, or a little earlier if the weather be favourable and the soil not too damp. The seed beds are carefully hoed and freed from all jungle. Germination of the seed

Cultivation
of tea

¹ J. F. Gruning—*Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers, Jalpaiguri*, Allahabad, 1911, p. 103.

takes place in about a month or six weeks from the time of sowing. When a year old, the young trees are planted out and are placed in rows at variable distances from 4' × 4' to 6' × 6'. The plants generally become fit for light plucking during the third year, but they do not attain full maturity until about the fifth or sixth year. Much depends, however, on the nature of the soil and cultivation, timely rainfall, and good management. Leaf plucking begins in April and continues to the end of December, when pruning commences and is carried on till the end of February. Hoeing is essential at intervals throughout the year. Any negligence and delay in this respect may cause injury to the plants. The usual enemies of the tea-plant are mosquito, red spider, and green fly. An attack from these pests does considerable damage. The plucking of leaves from the bushes is done chiefly by women and children. Men are employed only when necessary. They gather the leaves in a bamboo basket which is supplied to each of them. The basket hangs over the back of the plucker, and is supported by a plaited grass or cane band which is passed over the person's forehead. After plucking and weighing, the leaf is spread out in the withering house upon long wire trays which are fitted to shelves erected for them. As soon as the leaf becomes soft and velvety, it is put on a rolling table. Rolling breaks the cells of the leaf, and gets rid of a portion of the moisture, retaining as far as possible, the volatile oils and this induces fermentation, which is essential in proper manufacture of tea. A twist is also given to the leaf. As soon as the requisite twist is obtained, the rolled leaf is placed on tables and is covered with sheets of wet cloth or gunny. It is then allowed to ferment until it attains a bright coppery colour. After this the leaf is usually passed through the rolling-table for a short time. The next process is putting the leaf into the firing machine which is heated. The leaf having now lost all moisture, and being now dry, is put through the breaking machine. Sorted, the tea is packed.

The processes connected with the manufacture of tea have undergone changes in course of years. Although much tea is transplanted by hand, there are several good transplanting implements in use in the tea gardens. While the tea is young and weeds are likely to grow quickly on the uncovered soil, it receives both deep hoeing and light hoeing. In recent years, extensive cultivation experiments carried out at the Toklāi Experimental Station, Jorehāt, Assam have helped the planters to

improve the quality of tea as well as its production. Fertilizers are applied to tea every year or every second year and many types of manure are used. These include sulphate of ammonia, nitrate of soda, calcium cyanamide, oil cakes, blood meal, etc. Fertilizers are usually used in rotation.

The economic cultivation and production of tea is vitally linked with a proper understanding of insect pests and diseases which affect the tea plant during all stages of its growth. The main insect pests of the tea plant are the cockchafer or white grub, the termite or white ant, the looper caterpillar, the bunch or cluster caterpillar, the red slug and mites or acarinea. The Toklāi Experimental Station have contributed considerably to the planters' present-day knowledge of tea pests and diseases. Rapid strides in the investigations of insect pests and diseases of the tea plant and their eradication have been made in the forties following the advent of DDT and other synthetic plant protection compounds.

Tea is particularly susceptible to moisture. The growers pack their tea in boxes lined with lead or aluminium foil and this protection is adequate provided the tea reaches the blenders in reasonable time. Distribution in packets facilitate sales in small quantities. The earliest packets were either made of or lined with lead foil. In recent years, however, the technique of packaging has improved to meet all types of local conditions. The finest quality teas are marketed sometimes in tins or special moisture-proof packets. Over the past few decades, plastics of different kinds have been brought into use as a wrapper for the packet or carton. It may be added that for popular brands at low prices, paper packets with grease-proof linings are used extensively. After blending and packing, tea from the factories fans out to innumerable selling points in towns and villages. There are headquarters of the salesman who once a week calls upon the *bāzārs* in their jurisdictions, supplying the hotels and canteens and petty grocers with just sufficient tea to ensure that their stocks are always fresh.

In 1915, Jyotish Chandra Sanyal, a lawyer of Jalpāiguri who was connected with a few companies, made a proposal that Indian-managed Tea Companies of Jalpāiguri should form an association for safeguarding the interest of Indian planters. The principal organization of the tea growers at that time was the Indian Tea Association (ITA) which was being run wholly by non-Indians. The proposal put forward by Sanyal received

The packaging and distribution of tea

Indian Tea Planters' Association

enthusiastic support and within a short period the Indian Tea Planters' Association was formed with ten companies. Later, other tea companies joined the Association, a Branch Office of the Association was established in Calcutta for maintaining contacts with the Tea Board and different directorates of government and for giving efficient service to the members in the procurement and distribution of controlled materials, food-grains, and also for dealing with a host of other problems affecting the industry. ITPA now controls 104 tea estates of which 60 are in Jalpāiguri. At present, there are 160 tea gardens in the district of which 102 were originally non-Indian and 58 Indian. The area under tea of these gardens up to 31 March 1963 was 55,950 hectares. The production of tea in 1962 was 6,56,09,932 kg. A number of estates which were non-Indian originally have in recent years changed hand and have come under Indian management. Some of these estates have become members of ITPA. At present, about 27 per cent of the area and production of Jalpāiguri district may be attributed to Indian gardens and 73 per cent to their non-Indian counterpart. It may be added that the tea garden population of the district accounts for approximately 25 per cent of the population of the district. The number of workers in tea estates is about 1,90,000 and their annual wage bill in 1964-65 exceeded rupees eleven crores. The value of tea produced by Jalpāiguri tea estates in 1964-65 was about rupees thirty crores.¹

Production of tea
in 1972-73

The following table gives the latest available production and area of tea in Jalpāiguri (during 1972-73) including Koch Bihār which has only one garden.²

Number of estates	Area above 200 hectares and below 400 hectares	Production in kg.	No. of estates	Area above 400 hectares	Production in kg.
59	18,432.43	2,32,66,556	70	38,048.33	5,36,98,948

¹ Indian Tea Planters' Association, Jalpāiguri — *Golden Jubilee Souvenir*, Calcutta, 1965.

² Tea Board — *Tea Statistics 1972-73*, Calcutta, 1974, p. 13.

The 151 tea gardens cover an area of 59,988 hectares, and in 1973 they yielded 85,554,000 kg. tea. The average yield per hectare was 1,426 kg. in 1976.¹

Damage to tea plantations

The devastations caused to the tea plantations of the Duārs by innumerable mountain streams fall into two categories (a) the flooding action of the rivers resulting in waterlogging of the tea bushes and lowering of soil acidity, both of which are harmful to the standing tea bushes ; and (b) deposition of heavy loads of washed down boulders, sand, clay, gravel, etc. over the tea garden lands, making them practically unfit for tea cultivation. The tea gardens have suffered from several such natural calamities. Another source of danger to many tea estates is the possibility of sudden and sweeping changes in the river courses. It has been estimated that in 1964 floods in the turbulent Torsā alone had been responsible for destroying agricultural crops and standing tea bushes on about 25,000 acres.

Jalpāiguri has vast resources of commercially exploitable forests and there is good scope for development of timber-based industries, such as, plywood, tea-chest, paper mill and match factory. The large number of tea gardens in the district require various types of implements and tools. These are usually purchased from the Calcutta market. The Cutlery Service Station of the State Government at Kurseong supplies a portion of the tea garden implements. This supply is quite inadequate owing to very limited production. This is why there is good scope for the development of small-scale industry for manufacturing tea garden implements in the district. There is also very good scope for production of caffeine which is prepared from tea waste.

Industrial potential and plans for future development

In 1973, three ordinary Labour Welfare Centres and one Model Labour Welfare Centre were functioning at Bīrpārā, Hamiltonganj, Mātiāli and Sātāli respectively. They provided medical, educational, cultural and recreational facilities to workers, besides holding classes for workers' children and supplying to them, free of cost, primary books, pencils, slates, etc. While the working hours of the Labour Welfare Centres in the industrial areas are at present from 12 noon to 8 p.m. in most cases, such centres in the plantation areas remain open for four hours in the morning

Welfare of industrial labour

¹ Government of West Bengal, Information and Public Relations Office, Jalpāiguri — *Biś Daphā Karmasūchī Rūpāṇe Jalpāiguri*, 1976, p. 10.

and for four hours in the evening. The year of starting of the Labour Welfare Centres in the district and their addresses are as follows.

Name of L. W. Centre	Year of Starting	Address/ Post Office
Hamiltonganj	1947	Hamiltonganj
Mātiāli	1954	Mātiāli
Bīrpārā	1961	Bīrpārā
Sātāli	1962	Hāsimārā

Labour Welfare Day for the plantation area was observed in the district on 4 February 1973. All the 14 Labour Welfare Centres functioning in the plantation areas of North Bengal participated. An exhibition of handicrafts of the different centres was arranged. The exhibition attracted a good number of visitors.

Minimum
Wages Act

There are two posts of Inspectors of Minimum Wages, attached to the office of the Assistant Labour Commissioner, Jalpāiguri. One Inspector is posted at Jalpāiguri with jurisdiction over Sadar subdivision while the other is posted at Bīrpārā with jurisdiction over Ālipur Duār subdivision and Koch Bihār district. The main duty of the officers is to watch the working of the provisions of the Act and start claim cases or prosecutions, as the case may be, for violations of the Act. At the upper level, there are the Deputy Labour Commissioner posted at Siliguri with jurisdiction over all North Bengal districts and the Assistant Labour Commissioner at Siliguri with jurisdiction over Jalpāiguri and Koch Bihār districts. Besides, officers of the Agriculture Directorate and Block Development Officers are the ex-officio Inspectors, Minimum Wages in respect of employment in agriculture.¹

Industrial
disputes

During the past few years labour unrest mainly originated from demands for better wages, bonus and amenities, retrenchment of workers and disciplinary action taken against employees. The following statement shows the number of disputes for the period from 1969 to 1972.

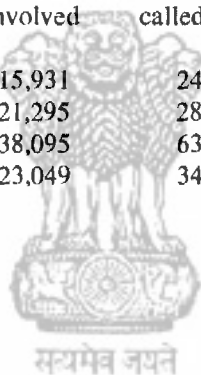
¹ Source : Department of Labour, Government of West Bengal.

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1969-72¹

Year	No. of disputes received	No. of disputes disposed of
1969	707	571
1970	603	504
1971	448	274
1972	556	412

The following table² gives the number of strikes and lock-outs for the period referred to above.

Year	No. of strikes & lock-outs	No. of persons involved	No. of strikes & lock-outs called off	Continued	Men involved
1969	25	15,931	24	1	15
1970	29	21,295	28	1	2,500
1971	64	38,095	63	1	2,500
1972	34	23,049	34	—	—



¹⁻² Deputy Commissioner, Jalpāiguri — *Jalpāiguri, 1973 : Final Year of the Fourth Plan*, p. 128.

CHAPTER VI

BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE

HISTORY OF BANKING

The money-lenders were and still are the main financing agencies especially in the rural areas. Institutional finance is, however, obtained from the Post Offices, Life Insurance Corporation of India and the Commercial and Co-operative Banks. Some non-scheduled Banks like Bengal Duārs Bank Ltd. (established 1911) and The Raikut Industrial Bank Ltd. (estd. 1920) have been taken over by the State Bank of India by an order of 1966 of the Central Government. The Jalpāiguri Banking and Trading Corporation Ltd. (estd. 1889) made a voluntary transfer of assets and liabilities in 1967 to the United Commercial Bank, and the Jotedars' Banking and Trading Corporation (estd. 1911) has been converted into a non-banking company in 1962 and the name has been changed to Jotedars' Trading and Loan Corporation Ltd. The following list shows the names of Banks, including their branches, along with their location as are to be found in the district.

NAMES OF COMMERCIAL BANKS IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT: 1972

Name	Location	
State Bank of India	Club Road, Jalpāiguri	
-do-	Merchant Road, ..	
-do-	Ālipur Duār	
-do-	Dhupguri	(P.S. Dhupguri)
-do-	Fālākātā	(P.S. Fālākātā)
-do-	Māl	(P.S. Māl)
-do-	Hāsimārā	(P.S. Kālchini)
-do-	Bīrpārā	(PS. Mādāri Hāt)
Central Bank of India	Jalpāiguri	
-do-	Domohāni	(P.S. Maynāguri)
-do-	Chālsa	(Matelli)
-do-	Belākobā	(P.S. Rājganj)
-do-	Gayerkātā	(P.S. Dhupguri)
-do-	New Jalpāiguri	(P.S. Rājganj)
United Bank of India	Jalpāiguri	
-do-	Ālipur Duār	
United Commercial Bank	Jalpāiguri	
-do-	Maynāguri	

Two branches of the State Bank of India are also proposed to be opened at Bānārhāt (Dhupguri Block) and Hamiltonganj (Kālchini Block). Banking facilities are now available in the interior Development Block areas, except a few Development Blocks where such facilities are yet to be extended.

These Commercial Banks including the State Bank of India serve an approximate population of 97,500 per office in the district.

There were 28 Commercial Bank offices in the district till June 1976. The average population served per office in 1976 was 63,000.

There are also two offices of the Central Co-operative Bank in the district, one at Jalpāiguri and the other at Dhupguri. The Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank, too, has two offices, one at Jalpāiguri and the other at Ālipur Duār. These Co-operative Banks serve an approximate population of 4,38,000 per office. Co-operative credit societies numbering 498 also have a hand in the matter of financing varied requirements.

The total deposits of the Commercial Banks as on 31 December 1971 amounted to Rs. 789.32 lakhs spread over different items as follows: Current deposits Rs. 277.52, Savings Bank deposits Rs. 284.85 and Term deposits Rs. 226.95, all in lakhs. Thus the average per capita deposits of Commercial Banks came to about Rs. 45.05. The following list further shows the growth of Bank deposits in recent years in the district.

Credit Facilities

GROWTH OF COMMERCIAL BANK DEPOSITS IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1969-71

As on	No. of offices	Total deposits (in lakhs of Rs.)	Annual rate of growth
31 December 1969	8	641.42	—
31 December 1970	12	699.31	+ 9.03%
31 December 1971	18	789.32	+12.87%

The deposits of the Co-operative Bank have also increased in recent years, and the following table would reveal the position during the last three years.

**GROWTH OF CO-OPERATIVE BANK DEPOSITS IN JALPÄIGURI
DISTRICT : 1969-71**

(in lakhs of Rs.)

As on	Current	Savings	Fixed	Annual rate of growth (on total)
31 December 1969	4.07	5.46	0.71	—
31 December 1970	2.19	7.53	2.05	14.9%
31 December 1971	2.42	8.30	2.32	10.8%

It will be seen from the above table that the deposits in Savings Bank and Fixed Accounts have increased, while in the Current Accounts the figures have gone down. The per capita deposit, however, comes to Rs. 0.74.

As on 31 December 1971 the Post Office Savings Bank of the district had a total balance of Rs. 3,52,08,708.87 spread over 43,817 accounts. The per capita deposit there comes to about Rs. 20.09.

Out of a target of Rs. 55 lakhs in 1969-70, a sum of Rs. 41,41,179 was collected from the sale of National Savings Certificates up to the end of December of that year. Such Certificates worth Rs. 11.31 lakhs were sold in the district during the Calendar year ended on 31 December 1970. The per capita contribution on that account comes to Rs. 0.65 in 1970. In 1975-76, the small savings amounted to Rs. 65,36,733.

The following table records the performances of Post offices in this regard in recent years:

**DEPOSITS IN THE POST OFFICES OF JALPÄIGURI
DISTRICT : 1969-71**

	1969	1970	1971
No. of accounts	39,620	42,651	43,817
Deposits (in lakhs of Rs.)	32,084	33,036	35,209
Rate of growth of deposits	—	2.9%	6.6%
Value of National Savings Certificate sold (in lakhs of Rs.)	4.53	2.56	11.31

The achievement of the Life Insurance Corporation of India in recent years can be realised from the following table.

ACHIEVEMENT OF LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA
IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1967-72

	No. of Policies	Sum assured (in lakhs of Rs.)	First year Premium collected (Rs.)
1967-68	6,687	315.96	46,52,270
1968-69	5,803	297.50	50,60,386
1969-70	5,852	303.48	54,23,294
1970-71	6,845	375.22	62,08,609
1971-72	8,369	489.39	Not available

The Commercial Banks including the State Bank of India of the district advanced credits of Rs. 275.15 lakhs in 1972 as follows (in lakhs of Rs.): for agriculture 4.00; for small scale industries 78.73 and for others 192.42. These banks had also advanced Rs. 228.54 (in lakhs) in 1969 and Rs. 253.75 (in lakhs) in 1970. The District Co-operative Bank also rendered financial assistance to agriculturists through its Primary Co-operative Credit Societies as detailed below.

LOANS ADVANCED BY THE DISTRICT CO-OPERATIVE BANK,
JALPAIGURI : 1969-71

	(in lakhs of Rs.)		
	Short Term crop Loan	Medium Term Agriculture Loan	Others
1969	37.63	1.04	7.43
1970	36.24	0.97	7.63
1971	34.54	0.97	7.61

The Primary Co-operative Credit Societies also make advances out of their own resources. These societies made a total advance of Rs. 52.84 lakhs as on 30 June 1970.

The Jalpāiguri Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank, Jalpāiguri advanced long-term credits to the extent of Rs. 12.92 lakhs as on 31 December 1971, while the Ālipur Duār Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank, Ālipur Duār advanced a sum of Rs. 7.18 lakhs for the same account during the same period.

Taccavi loans of various kinds, namely, Cattle Purchase loan, Fertilizer loan and Agricultural loan, as advanced by Government to farmers have been listed in Chapter IV.

INDEBTEDNESS

Debts are incurred by individuals for meeting various commitments like marriage, funeral ceremony, etc. Table 1 in Appendix A shows the percentage distribution of families with and without debts in the rural areas in 1366 B.S. (1960-61).¹

Table 2 in Appendix A shows the percentage of families which took loans in relation to the total families in the rural areas of the district.

Table² in Appendix B further shows the details of debts incurred in the rural areas during the aforesaid period.

For all
For Agricultural
families

It appears from the foregoing table that the quantum of outstanding loan at the beginning of a year is greater than that which is taken during the year. It can so happen only because old debts are added to new borrowings with interests piling up year to year, there being very little repayment.

A report³ says that the average borrowers from Government in 1957 numbered as follows: Cultivators 200, Non-cultivators 420, All families 242, Big cultivators 20, Large cultivators 159, Medium cultivators 333 and small cultivators 218.

Appendices C, D at the end of this chapter would further show average debt per family, cash loans borrowed per family in the district in 1951-52.

A survey was carried out by the Cultural Research Institute of the State Government between 1967 and 1969 in several villages of the district, namely, Uttar Kāmākhyāguri, Dakshin Kāmākhyāguri, Madhya Kāmākhyāguri, Khutimāri, Indubasti, Bangdoba in the field of economy etc. to assess the nature and extent of the gap that prevailed among the Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and other communities there. The said survey revealed the following facts as set forth in the table below.

¹ *Family Budget enquiry in Rural and Urban Areas of West Bengal, 1959-60 and 1960-61*, Government of West Bengal, State Statistical Bureau, Calcutta, 1967, pp. 11-12.

² *ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

³ *All India Rural Credit Survey: Report of the Committee of Directors, Vol. I, The Survey Report, Part 2 (Credit Agencies)*, Reserve Bank of India, Bombay, 1957, pp. 114, 116.

AVERAGE INDEBTEDNESS IN SELECT VILLAGES OF JALPAIGURI
DISTRICT: 1967-69

Community	Total No. of families	Percentage of families indebted	Average per family debt
			Cash (in Rs.) Paddy (in Kg.)
Ordinary villages: Uttar, Dakshin and Madhya Kāmākhyāguri in Kumārgrām P.S.	146	34.93	196.29 197.64
Scheduled Tribes	481	79.72	235.66 213.71
Scheduled Castes	617	50.41	396.84 206.88
Other communities	1,244	55.07	295.58 207.51
Total			
Forest villages:			
Khutimāri, Indubasti and Bangdoba in Bhalkā Forest Bastis	36	61.12	123.33 139.47
Scheduled Tribes	—	—	— —
Scheduled Castes	41	39.02	316.00 68.33
Other communities	77	49.34	271.54 122.44
Total			

It will be seen from the above table that greater percentage of indebted Scheduled Tribe families is to be found in the forest villages, while in the ordinary villages the percentage of indebted families of other communities is greater than in the forest villages. The Scheduled Castes people are the most indebted class of all and they belong only to the ordinary villages.¹

Industrial Loans

Government agencies advanced Rs. 1.87 lakhs as industrial loans to small-scale industrial units during the last three years. The following list shows the agencies distributing industrial loans there.

SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIAL LOAN IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1969-72

	Disbursed by Deputy Commissioner		Disbursed by Industrial Officer	
	Units assisted	Amount disbursed Rs.	Units assisted	Amount disbursed Rs.
1969-70	1	3,000	21	21,000
1970-71	1	4,000	14	15,000
1971-72	6	30,000	41	42,550

A Blockwise disbursement of Industrial loans under the Bengal State Aid to Industries Act is tabled below.

THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

The Co-operative movement of the district started with the opening of the Bonāpārā Grāmya Samavāy Śashyabhāndār in 22 February 1911 at village Bonāpārā. Some 13 agriculturists united and formed this society and had it registered under the Co-operative laws to fight against the village Shylocks. A number of other Co-operative institutions also came into being at that time, but most of them went over to East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) at the time of the Partition. The aforesaid society began with a capital of Rs. 136½ raised from among the members and advanced the same as agricultural loan. Later, the Pioneer Bank of Shillong made an advance of loan of Rs. 500 to the society to augment its finance. It also took a loan of Rs. 2,000 in 1915 from the Eastern Bengal and Assam Central Co-operative Bank

¹ *Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 1969-70, Government of India, Delhi, pp. 154, 292.*

LOANS DISBURSED TO SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIAL UNITS OF
JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1969-72

Block	1969 - 70		1970 - 71		1971 - 72	
	Units assisted	Amount disbursed	Units assisted	Amount disbursed	Units assisted	Amount disbursed
		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.
Alipur Duār I	—	—	8	2,000	5	2,000
Alipur Duār II	12	2,500	8	2,000	9	3,000
Dhupguri	6	2,000	—	—	3	1,000
Falakata	7	3,000	—	—	8	3,000
Jalpaiguri	38	20,000	18	5,000	3	1,000
Kalchini	5	1,500	3	1,000	3	1,000
Kumargram	—	—	—	—	6	2,000
Madarihat	3	1,000	—	—	3	1,000
Mal	8	2,000	13	4,000	3	1,000
Matelli	4	1,000	5	2,000	7	2,000
Maynaguri	—	—	—	—	3	1,000
Nagrakata	—	—	—	—	3	1,000
Raiganj	8	2,000	—	—	3	1,000

to enhance its fund. The number of members of this society went up to 52 in 1968, and the total amount of loans advanced by it came to Rs. 12,700 the same year. There were 23 credit societies during 1911-20, 60 during 1920-30, 19 during 1930-40, 295 during 1940-55 and 263 during 1955-60. The names of a few other old Co-operative societies of the district are Mahākālguri Samavāy Samiti, Ālipur Duār (established 1912), Fakirganj Samavāy Bank, Jalpāiguri Sadar P.S. (1913), Munamari Samavāy Samiti, Rājganj P.S. (1913), Jamidārpāra Samavāy Samiti, Rājganj P.S. (1913). As it was difficult for these institutions to collect financial advances from the Banks at Shillong or Dacca, an institution named Jalpāiguri Central Co-operative Banking Union was created and registered on 6 April 1919 to tackle the problem. The Central Co-operative Bank used to advance short-term and middle-term loans to its member co-operatives to enable them to make further advances to agriculturists. The Jalpāiguri Land Mortgage Bank, registered on 4 October 1953 began to make long-term advances of loans to agriculturists for purchasing bullocks, agricultural implements, etc. It began its work in 1958-59. Now there is another Land Mortgage Bank at Ālipur Duār.

Loans advanced
by Co-operatives

The following table would show the sums advanced as loan by the said two institutions for sometime past.

LOANS ADVANCED BY CO-OPERATIVE INSTITUTIONS IN
JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1919-68

	By The Central Co-operative Bank Rs.	By The Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank Rs.
1919-20	56,972	—
1929-30	12,907	—
1939-40	38,098	—
1949-50	1,47,000	—
1958-59	—	29,900
1959-60	6,97,875	91,850
1964-65	32,54,454	9,59,962
1965-66	36,60,885	10,50,981
1966-67	39,61,394	11,51,481
1967-68	41,59,000	13,56,823

The Jalpāiguri Central Co-operative Bank, Jalpāiguri has also a branch at Dhupguri and now proposes to open a branch each at Māl and Maynāguri. Apart from advancing loans, it affords other banking facilities like remittance facilities, collection of bills, etc. This Bank lost from its area of operation five thanas which went over to East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) at the time of the Partition. The bank had a membership of 461 affiliated societies on 30 June 1971, and its paid-up capital stood at Rs. 9 lakhs, of which Rs. 3 lakhs represented Government contribution. The working capital of the Bank stood at Rs. 48.38 lakhs consisting of borrowings of Rs. 32.20 lakhs, deposits of Rs. 12.16 lakhs and its own funds Rs. 4.02 lakhs. The aggregate lendings of the Bank stood at Rs. 41.21 lakhs on 30 June 1971 of which the medium-term loans were Rs. 95,000 and short-term-cum-working capital-cum-share Capital loans were Rs. 40.26 lakhs.

Jalpāiguri Central
Co-operative Bank

The two Land Mortgage Banks of the district afford long-term credit facilities. The period of loans varies from 7 to 15 years ; and the sums vary from Rs. 700 to Rs. 25,000. Loans are advanced to individual members through the Primary Land Mortgage Banks for redeeming old debts, reclaiming lands, purchasing improved agricultural machinery, etc. During 1970-71, the Bank gave a financial assistance of Rs. 5.71 lakhs. The financial position of the Banks on 30 June 1970 was as follows:

Land Mortgage
Banks

FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE LAND MORTGAGE BANKS AT
JALPĀIGURI AND ĀLIPUR DUAR ON 30 JUNE 1970

	Rs.
Paid-up share capital	1,00,000
Reserve and other funds	38,000
Borrowings	13,40,000

On 31 December 1971, the Jalpāiguri Land Mortgage Bank had total loans outstanding to the extent of Rs. 12,92,000 while the Ālipur Duār Land Mortgage Bank had Rs. 7,18,000 during the said period.

The Jalpāiguri Co-operative range office came into existence in 1961, and prior to that it was included in the Dārjeeling range. There are altogether 720 co-operative societies in this district, of which 498 are Agricultural Credit societies. The following list shows the different kinds of societies operating in the district.

Nature of the society	No. of units	Nature of the society	No. of units
Bakery	2	Labour Contact	8
Canteen	1	Land Mortgage Bank	2
Central Co-operative Bank	1	Live-stock	2
Consumers' Stores	67	L.S. Credit (Agricultural)	13
Dairy	2	Marketing	18
Fisheries	12	Multipurpose	19
Farming	13	Other industrial	18
Samavāy Krishi Unnayan Samiti	298	Other non-Credit	1
Transport	15	Primary Agricultural non-Credit	13
U.C. Credit	133	Primary Co-operative Bank	1
Weavers'	19	Printing and dyeing	2
Women's	1	Printing Press	2
Grain Bank	39	Processing	14
Housing societies	4		

The 498 agricultural credit societies had a working capital of Rs. 76,65,000 on 30 June 1970, while they granted loans of Rs. 3,43,000 during the same period. They had outstanding loans to the extents of Rs. 52,48,000 repayable to the Jalpāiguri Co-operative Banks and Rs. 6,00,000 repayable to the Cooch Behar Central Co-operative Bank (Ālipur Duārs subdivision). The 13 non-agricultural credit societies had a working capital of Rs. 5,39,000 during the same period. They granted loans of Rs. 5,99,000, while the outstanding loan amount was Rs. 4,38,000. The 67 primary and 1 wholesale Consumers' Stores had 14,722

members and a working capital of Rs. 13,32,000 on 30 June 1970. They made purchases for Rs. 66,90,000, while their sales fetched Rs. 63,55,000 during the same period.

Besides some agricultural products, the district produces large quantities of tea and jute. It also produces fruits, jute, tobacco, etc. The little foodgrains that are produced here, are consumed within the district. The main items of import are rice, spices, oil, pulses, wheat, sugar, iron, steel, cement, coal, etc. Rice to the extent of 10 lakh maunds is imported from the neighbouring West Dinājpur and Dārjeeling districts and from Nepal. Pulses to the extent of about 60 lakh maunds are imported from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Potatoes of different kinds, wheat and oil are also imported. The total approximate value of the import is Rs. 10 crores a year. **Trade**

The exports on the other hand are the three cash crops (the three T's), namely, tea, timber, tobacco and jute and oranges. The total value of the tea exported is about Rs. 40 crores. The total marketable surplus of the district is about 14,00,000 maunds of jute (valued approx. Rs. 7,00,00,000), 10,000 maunds of tobacco (valued approx. Rs. 11,00,000) and 10,00,000 pieces of oranges (valued approx. Rs. 1,00,000). Jute and oranges are exported to Calcutta, and tobacco is exported to Assam, Orissa and Calcutta.

The West Bengal State Co-operative Marketing Federation Ltd., functioning through the Barnes Large Sized Co-operative Agricultural Marketing Society Ltd. distributes agricultural inputs and agricultural implements in the district. This Society has been distributing agricultural inputs and implements directly to the cultivators of the area. The following co-operative societies are engaged in distributing the aforesaid agricultural materials in different areas of the district. **AGRICULTURAL MARKETING**

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SOCIETIES IN JALPĀIGURI
DISTRICT : 1972

Name	For (Block)
Māl Thana Large Sized Co-operative Agricultural Marketing Society	Māl
Dhupguri L.S. C.A.M.S.	Dhupguri
Rangalibāzār -do-	Mādārihāt
Fālākātā -do-	Fālākātā
Kumārgrām -do-	Kumārgrām
Parerpar -do-	Ālipur Duār I
Ālipur Duār II -do-	Ālipur Duār II
Sovābāri -do-	Jalpāiguri
Jalpāiguri Co-operative Rice Mills Society	-do-
Rangdhāmāli Samavāy Krishi Unnayan Samiti	-do-
Dhanirāmpur -do-	Ālipur Duār I
Savari Samavāy Krishija Vipayan Samiti	Dhupguri

There are some other important agencies engaged in the distribution of agricultural inputs in the district, namely, the Fertilizer Corporation of India, Food Corporation of India, National Seeds Corporation of India, Imperial Chemical Industries, Tata Fison Ltd., Rallis India Ltd., etc.

The Modified Ration Shops in the district numbered 506 as on 27 November 1976.

Agricultural marketing is not, however, well-developed for lack of an adequate transport system. Agricultural produce is, therefore, generally marketed at the nearest assembling *hāts* and at unremunerative prices. A list of the markets is furnished in Appendix G.

Processing of agricultural produce is also confined to rice-handling, flour-milling and oil-milling. These units are small and inadequate to meet the total requirement of the district. The following list shows their number. They generally process 150 to 850 mds. of cereals per 8 hours a day.

TYPES OF PROCESSING MILLS IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1972

Type	No.
Rice Mills	11
Rice and Oil Mills	7
Flour Mills	2
Small Industries	1

Processing

The producers usually have very little storage facilities on scientific line. They store paddy, jute, tobacco, mustard seed, etc. in a corner of their dwelling houses. Merchants, however, have separate godowns for storing the commodities. There is only one cold storage in the district, near Siliguri town.

Storage

Warehousing facilities available in the district are listed below.

Warehouses

WAREHOUSING FACILITIES IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1972

	Jalpāiguri Sadar Subdivision		Ālipur Duārs Subdivision		District Total	
	No.	Capacity (in MT)	No.	Capacity (in MT)	No.	Capacity (in MT)
Warehousing Corporation's Warehouses	1	1,400	1	2,500	2	3,900
Government Godowns	25	53,400	Nil	Nil	25	53,400
Co-operative Godowns	14	1,714	5	792	19	2,506
Private Godowns	800 (approx.)	N.A.	600 (approx.)	N.A.	1,400 (approx.)	N.A.

The Census of 1961 enumerated 27,439 persons or about 5 per cent of the total working population of the district as engaged in trade and commerce. There are eight trade associations in the district, namely, Ālipur Duār Merchants' Association, Ālipur Duār; Dhupguri Byabasāyee Samiti, Dhupguri; Fish Merchants' Association, Jalpāiguri; Indian Tea Planters' Association, Jalpāiguri; Jalpāiguri District Merchants' Association, Jalpāiguri; Jalpāiguri District Mill Owners' Association, Jalpāiguri; North Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Jalpāiguri; and Wholesale Cloth Merchants' Association, Jalpāiguri..

TRADE
ASSOCIATIONS

Fairs and festivals are quite large in number in the district, a list of which is given in Appendix H.

APPENDIX A
DEBTS INCURRED BY THE RURAL FAMILIES OF JALPAIGURI
DISTRICT : 1966 B.S.

Table—1

P E R C E N T A G E					
of families having no loan outstanding at the beginning of the year			of families having loans outstanding at the beginning of the year		
and had taken no loans during the year	but had taken fresh loans during the year		but had taken no loans during the year	and had taken fresh loans during the year	
Agricul- tural	Non- Agricul- tural		Agricul- tural	Agricul- tural	Non- Agricul- tural
2.29	0.73	0.63	0.24	0.37	0.08

Table—2 LOANS-TAKING FAMILIES IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1966 B.S.

Agricultural families				Non-Agricultural families	
Family having loans outstanding at the beginning of the year to the total no. of families in the district	Family having taken loans during the year to the total no. of families in the district	having loans outstanding at the beginning of the year	taking fresh loans during the year	having loans outstanding at the beginning of the year	taking fresh loans during the year
17.25	29.24	2.94	2.71	2.24	2.64

APPENDIX B

DEBTS IN THE RURAL AREAS OF JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1966 B.S.

	For all		For Agricultural families	
	Percentage of families reporting	Average per reporting family (Rs.)	Percentage of families reporting	Average per reporting family (Rs.)
Loans outstanding at the beginning of the year	17.25	371.25	17.36	431.57
Loans taken during the year	29.24	232.24	28.26	198.62
Loans repaid during the year	11.11	216.35	11.54	204.02
Loans outstanding at the end of the year	35.11	307.34	35.12	306.13

APPENDIX C¹AVERAGE DEBT PER FAMILY CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO CREDIT-
AGENCY IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1951-52

(IN RUPEES)

Group	Total Debt	Govern- ment	Co-opera- tive & Com- mercial Banks	Rela- tives	Land- lords	Profession- al (Private) Money- lenders	Others
Big cultivators	115	—	—	53	35	27	—
Large cultivators	111	1	1	55	35	20	—
Medium cultivators	72	—	—	24	39	8	1
Small cultivators	68	2	—	27	17	21	—
Cultivators	83	1	—	34	31	16	—
Non-cultivators	31	5	—	7	—	19	1
All families	75	2	—	30	27	16	—

APPENDIX D²

CASH LOANS BORROWED IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1951-52

(AMOUNT IN RS. PER FAMILY)

	All cultivators	Cash loans out- standing for one year or less	Cash loans out- standing for more than one year
No. of loans borrowed per family	0.6	0.1	0.1
Total amount borrowed	70.7	15.5	2.7
Rate of Interest-Nil	57.2	11.8	2.5
Less than 3½ %	2.7	2.7	—
3½-7 %	0.6	0.3	—
7-10 %	0.1	—	—
10-12½ %	0.4	0.2	0.1
12½-18 %	2.1	—	—
18-25 %	7.4	0.2	—
25-35 %	0.2	0.2	—
35-50 %	—	—	—
50 % and above	—	—	—
Unclassified	—	—	0.1

¹Source : *Rural Credit follow-up Survey, 1956-57*, Reserve Bank of India, Bombay, p. 647.²Source : *All India Rural Credit Survey, Technical Report*, Reserve Bank of India, Bombay, pp. 583, 610, 616.

APPENDIX E*

AVERAGE BORROWINGS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO CREDIT AGENCIES IN JALPÄIGURI DISTRICT
(AMOUNT IN RS., FIGURES IN BRACKETS DENOTE PERCENTAGE TO TOTAL BORROWINGS) : 1957

	Total Borrowings	Govt.	Co- opera- tives	Relatives	Landlords (to tenants only)	Agriculturist money-lenders	Professional money-lenders	Traders & Commission agents	Others
Per Cultivating family	87	1 (1.1)	— (0.3)	34 (38.4)	39 (44.7)	— (0.3)	12 (13.3)	1 (1.5)	— (0.4)
Per Non-cultivating-family	21	3 (13.7)	— (0.7)	5 (22.2)	— (0.7)	—	12 (57.8)	— (2.3)	1 (2.6)
All Families (per Family)	78	1 (1.6)	— (0.3)	29 (37.7)	34 (43.1)	— (0.2)	12 (15.1)	1 (1.5)	— (0.5)

*Source : *All India Rural Credit Survey : Report of the Committee of Direction : Vol. I, The Survey Report. Part 2 (Credit Agencies), Reserve Bank of India, Bombay, 1957. pp. 10,31,49.*

APPENDIX F*

AVERAGE DEBT CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO CREDIT AGENCY IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT (AMOUNT IN RS.
FIGURES IN BRACKETS DENOTE PERCENTAGE TO TOTAL DEBT) : 1957

	Total Debt.	Govt.	Co-operatives & Commercial Banks		Relatives	Landlords	Professional money-lenders	Traders & Commission agents		Others
Per Cultivating family	83	1 (1.2)	— (0.4)	—	34 (41.4)	31 (37.7)	16 (18.6)	— (0.3)	—	— (0.4)
Per Non-cultivating family	31	5 (14.8)	— (0.4)	—	7 (20.9)	— (1.5)	19 (59.7)	— (0.9)	—	1 (1.8)
All Families (per Family)	75	2 (2.1)	— (0.4)	—	30 (40.1)	27 (35.5)	16 (21.1)	— (0.3)	—	— (0.5)

*Source : *All India Rural Credit Survey : Report of the Committee of Direction : Vol. I. The Survey Report. Part 2 (Credit Agencies), Reserve Bank of India, Bombay, 1957. pp. 19, 39, 53.*

APPENDIX G
LIST OF IMPORTANT MARKETS/HATS IN JALPAIGURI
DISTRICT

Name of the Market	Name of the Block	Nature of the market	Attendance	Principal Agricultural Commodities dealt in
JALPAIGURI SADAR SUB-DIVISION				
Dinbāzār	Jalpāiguri	Daily	2,500	Rice, Pulses, Vegetables, Fish, Meat, Sugar.
Berubāri Hāt	"	Saturday & Wednesday	1,500	Oils, Spices and cotton, Piece goods.
Gouri Hāt	"	Tuesday & Friday	2,000	Jute, Paddy, Rice, Vegetables etc.
Rāiganj Hāt	Rāiganj	Sunday & Thursday	3,000	Jute, Paddy, Rice, Cattle etc.
Belākobā Hāt	"	Tuesday & Friday	400	Paddy, Rice, Jute, Goat, Poultry etc.
Maynāguri Hāt	Maynāguri	Tuesday & Friday	10,000	Jute, Rice, Vegetables etc.
Rahimganj Hāt	"	Tuesday & Wednesday & Sunday	2,000	Paddy, Rice, Jute, Vegetables etc.
Rājār Hāt	"	Monday & Thursday	1,000	Paddy, Rice, Jute, Cattle etc.

APPENDIX G (Concl'd.)

Name of the Market	Name of the Block	Nature of the market	Attendance	Principal Agricultural Commodities dealt in
Dhupguri Hāṭ	Dhupguri	Tuesday & Saturday	10,000	Paddy, Rice, Pulses, Jute, Mustard, Vegetables etc.
Gayerkāṭā	"	Sunday	3,000	Paddy, Rice, Orange, Vegetables etc.
Chāmārchī	"	Wednesday	3,000	Butter, Orange, Poultry, Vegetables etc.
Nāthoā Hāṭ	"	Monday & Thursday	2,000	Paddy, Rice, Jute, Mustard etc.
Bānārhāt	"	Sunday	2,000	Paddy, Rice, Jute, Mustard.
Bāṭāigole Hāṭ	Māl	Sunday	8,000	Paddy, Rice, Vegetable, Goat & Poultry etc.
Oodlabāri Hāṭ	"	Sunday	1,500	Paddy, Rice & Potato etc.
Lataguri Hāṭ	"	Wednesday & Saturday	2,000	Paddy, Rice & Potato etc.
Chālsā Hāṭ	Matelli	Thursday	1,500	Paddy, Rice & Vegetables
Matelli Hāṭ	"	Sunday	8,000	Paddy, Rice & Vegetables
ĀLIPUR DUARS SUB-DIVISION				
Ālipur Duār Hāṭ	Ālipur Duār I	Thursday & Sunday	4,000	Paddy, Rice, Jute, Tobacco & Mustard Seed
Mathurā Hāṭ	"	Monday	2,500	Rice, Paddy & Jute
Silbāri Hāṭ	"	Wednesday & Saturday	2,500	Rice, Paddy, Jute & Cattle
Gharghariā Hāṭ	"	Sunday & Thursday	2,500	Rice, Paddy, Jute & Vegetables etc.

Bābur Hāṭ	"	Tuesday & Friday	2,500	Rice, Paddy, Jute & Vegetables etc.
Sāmuktalā Hāṭ	Ālipur Duār II	Monday & Friday	8,000	Paddy, Rice, Jute, Mustard and Cattle etc.
Salsatabāri Hāṭ	"	Tuesday & Saturday	2,500	Rice, Paddy, Jute
Bhātiābāri Hāṭ	"	Sunday & Wednesday	2,500	Paddy, Rice, Jute and Mustard
Falakātā Hāṭ	Falakātā	Tuesday & Friday	6,000	Paddy, Rice, Tobacco, Jute and Mustard
Jātesvar Hāṭ	"	Tuesday & Saturday	2,500	Paddy, Jute, Rice, Cattle, Mustard
Birpara Hāṭ	Madārihāt	Sunday	2,500	Paddy, Rice, Vegetables
Sisubāri Hāṭ	"	Thursday	3,500	Paddy, Rice, Jute, Mustard etc.
Hamiltonganj Hāṭ	Kālchini	Sunday	2,500	Paddy, Rice, Poultry and Vegetables etc.
Dalsingpara Hāṭ	"	Sunday	2,000	Rice, Orange, Vegetables
Hāsimārā Hāṭ	"	Sunday	2,500	Rice, Poultry, Vegetables
Kamākhyaḡuri Hāṭ	Kumārgrām	Sunday & Wednesday	3,500	Rice, Paddy, Jute and Mustard etc.
Kulkuli Hāṭ	"	Sunday	2,500	Paddy, Rice, Jute and Cattle

APPENDIX H

LIST OF FAIRS AND FESTIVALS IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT

P.S.	J.L. No.	Mouza	Time (Bengali month)	Occasion	Duration	Approx. attendance
Jalpāguri	3	Patakata	Kartik	Gopāstami	3 days	10,000-15,000
"	5	Maskalai Bāri	Kartik	Maskali Puja	9 days	4,000-5,000
"	5	Raykatpara	Aswin	Durga Puja	1 week	—
"	8	Garalbāri	Chaitra	Baruni Snan	1 week	2,000-3,000
"	8	Dhāpganj	Aswin	Durga Puja	1 day	7,000-8,000
"	21	Boālmāri	Chaitra	Dharma- Sabhar Mela	—	—
"	22	Kharaja Berubāri	Chaitra	Manasa Puja	2 days	1,400
"	23	Jamadār Pāra	Aswin	Durga Puja	—	—
"	"	"	—	Maharram	—	—
"	"	Dholakgram	Shravan	Manasa Puja	1 day	—
"	"	"	Chaitra	Baruni Snan	3 days	2,500-3,000
"	"	"	"	Charak	—	—
"	"	Gomasta para	Aswin	Durga Puja	4 days	3,000-4,000
"	"	Rangdhamāli	"	Vijaya Dasami	1 day	5,000
"	"	Din Bazar	"	"	—	—
"	"	Nadir Ghat	Shravan	Manasa Puja	1 day	3,000
"	"	Rajbari	Aswin	Vijaya Dasami	1 day	2,000
"	"	Sonar Hāt	Chaitra	Charak	1 day	2,000
"	"	Gouri Hāt	Kartik	Gopāstami	1 day	3,000
Rājganj	28	Paharpur Gosala	Kartik	Kali Puja	—	—
"	"	Sukhāni	—	Barabarir Mela	—	—
"	"	Talmahat	Phalgun	Sivaratri	1 month	1,00,000
Maynāguri	43	Gartali Jalpesh	Aswin	Bhandali	1 day	5,000-6,000
"	52	Padamati	—	(Bana Durga Puja)	1 day	500-600
"	52	"	Kartik	Bhadrakali Puja	1 day	—
"	80	Jhār Barāgila	Chaitra	Charak and Paltiya Gan	2-3 days	—
Dhupguri	155	Gendāpārā Tea Garden	Aswin	Durga Puja	1 day	5,000
"	172	Mallik Pārā East (Purba)	Shravan	Manasa Puja	3 days	1,200-1,300

172	Dhupguri	Malik Para East (Purba)	Aswin	Durga Puja	1 day	—
"	"	"	Kartik	Kali Puja	—	—
202	"	Bhandani	Aswin	Bhandali	1 day	—
147	Matiali	Indong Tea Garden	26 January	(Bana Durga Puja)	—	—
"	"	"	15 August	Republic Day	9 days	2,500
43	Madāri Hāt	Khagra Bari	Kartik	Kali Puja	1 day	2,000
45	"	(Hossainabad Tea Garden)	Aswin	Durga Puja	—	—
18	"	Birpāra Tea Garden	Aswin	Durga Puja	1 day	500
31	"	Madāri Hāt	"	"	4 days	1,000
38	"	Hāntupāra	Kartik	Kali Puja	1 day	200
"	"	Shishubāri	Aswin	Durga Puja	4 days	200
10	"	Lankapāra	"	"	1 day	200
30	"	Mujnai	Kartik	Kali Puja	3 days	1,000
32	"	Dumchipāra	"	"	3 days	800
33	"	Ranijhora	"	"	3 days	1,550
71	Fālākātā	Jateswar Hāt	Aswin	Durga Puja	7 days	—
70	"	Jhār Beltāli	Phalgun	Dol	5 days	—
82	"	Beltāli	Phalgun	"	7 days	—
89	"	Bhandāri	Kartik	Kali Puja	2 days	300
89	"	Pramod Nagar	Phalgun	Dol	4-5 days	—
96	"	"	Aswin	Durga Puja	1 day	—
102	"	Fālākātā	Phalgun	Dol	2 days	300
"	"	Sālkumār	"	"	"	"
98	"	West (Paschim) Khaunchan	Aswin	Durga Puja	5-7 days	500
72	"	Chua Khola	Phalgun	Dol	5-6 days	600
61	"	Hedayet Nagar	Chaitra	Baruni Snan	7 days	700
11	Kālchīni	Malsa Gaon	Phalgun	Dol	1 day	3,000-4,500
—	"	Satali Basti	"	Mahakal Puja	—	4,000-5,000
—	"	Jayanti	Kartik	Kali Puja	3 days	2,000
51	"	Hamilton Ganj	"	"	9-11 days	1,000
52	Alipur Duār	Sālkumār Hāt	Chaitra	Charak	—	—
56	"	Kalabaria	Aswin	Bhandali Puja	3 days	500-600
88	"	Jogendra Nagar	Phalgun	Mahakal Puja	3-4 days	500-700
"	"	Ghāgrā	"	"	"	"

APPENDIX H (Concl.)

P.S.	J.L. No.	Mouza	Time (Bengali month)	Occasion	Duration	Approx. attendance
Ālipur Duār	100	Damanpur	Chaitra	Astami Shan	1 day	1,000
"	96	Uttar Majher Dabri	Aswin	Durga Puja	—	—
"	119	Totpāra	Aswin	"	—	400
"	152	Mahākālguri	"	"	—	—
"	152	"	Phalgun	Sivaratri	—	—
"	152	"	Phalgun	Dol	—	—
"	165	Chepāni	Bhadra	Mahakal Puja	3 months	—
"	172	Chikliguri	Agrahayan	Jagaddhatri Puja	3 days	500-600
"	173	(West, North, East)				—
"	174					
"	"	Sonapur	Phalgun	Dol	1 day	3,000-4,000
"	"	Ālipur Duār-	Aswin	Durga Puja	—	600-700
"	99	Hat Khola	Aswin	"	4 days	4,000
"		Barabisa	—	Hari Mandirer	3 days	1,000
Kumārgrām	185			Mela		
"	192	Nārathali West (Paschim)	Aswin	Bhandali Puja	—	100
"	199	Chengmāri	Chaitra	Basanti Puja	2 days	—
"	202	Paglār Hāt	Kartik	Kali Puja	2 days	500-600
"	203	Kumārgrām	Agrahayan	Jagaddhatri Puja	3 days	1,000-2,500
"	223	Pukhri Gaon	Aswin	Durga Puja	3 days	—

CHAPTER VII

COMMUNICATIONS

It is said that a king named Nīlāmbar of Kāmtāpur-Kāmrūp ROAD TRANSPORT constructed several roads which fanned out from the capital to different directions of his territory, remnants of which are still to be found in various places. One such road proceeded along the north-western direction to Jalpeśvar temple of Jalpāiguri. A part of the said road still exists under the name of Dinhātā-Mekhliganj Road.¹ Before the opening of the Bengal Duārs Railway, the tea-gardens of the Dām-Dim area depended on the Jalpāiguri-Dām-Dim and Phūlbāri Ghāt roads to send their tea to or get supplies from Jalpāiguri and Siliguri.²

At present, the State Highway connects the district headquarters of Jalpāiguri with Ālipur Duār, Koch Bihār, etc. All the thirteen block headquarters are connected either by State Highways or good metalled roads. Distant places like Delhi, Lucknow, Patna, Calcutta, Gauhāti, etc. are connected by National Highways. The district has a total of 1,644 km. road maintained by the P.W.D., the Zilla Parishad and the Municipality, the details of which are as follows : P.W.D. Road, metalled 801 km. and unmetalled 90 km.; Zilla Parishad Road, metalled 139 km., unmetalled 495 km. and Municipal Road, metalled 53 km. and unmetalled 66 km.³

The Public Works (Roads) and Public Works Department of the State Government maintained 1,061 km. of extra-municipal roads in the district as on 31 March 1975.

The following table gives the particulars of the roads constructed by P.W. (Roads) Department during the period from 1954 to 1968.⁴

¹ Khan Chowdhury Amanatulla Ahmed — *Kochbehärer Itihās*, Koch Bihar, 1936, p. 43.

² J. F. Gruning — *Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers : Jalpāiguri*, Allahabad, 1911, p. 116.

³ Central Bank of India — *Lead Bank Survey Report : Jalpāiguri*, Siliguri, 1972, pp. 29-30.

⁴ Source : Assistant Engineer, Jalpāiguri Construction Subdivision P.W. (Roads) Department, Government of West Bengal.

Name of the road	Length in km.	Width in metres	Class of roads
Maynāguri-Chāngrā-bāndhā Road	20.60	3.66	Major District road
Jaldhākā-Rānirhāt Feeder Road	8.05	„	„
Dhupguri-Fālākātā Road	22.50	3.65	Other district road
Link Road to Mondalghāt	11.26	2.44	Village road
Jalpāiguri-Pāhārpur Road	4.66	4.88	State Highway
Bonārpārā Road	7.24	2.44	Village road
Road from Maynāguri railway station to Maynāguri-Chāngrā-bāndhā Road	13.00	2.44	„
Link Road to Berubāri Road	1.60	3.66	State Highway
Link Road to Jalpeś temple	1.10	2.44	„
Heerāmati Gurudevpuhāt Road	2.00	2.44	„
Kholāigram-Kheti-Phulbari Road	7.24	2.44	„

Vehicles and conveyances

The bullock cart still plays a very important part in the economic life of the people, especially in the countryside where it provides the most economical means of transport, mainly of goods and occasionally of passengers. While cycles can be seen in every nook and corner of the district, cycle-rickshaws are mainly concentrated in the urban areas and in places of interest.

There are the following categories of vehicles (stage carriage and contract carriage) plying in this district, namely, (a) buses run by NBSTC (North Bengal State Transport Corporation), (b) buses run by private operators, (c) *hāt* buses run by private operators and (d) taxis including station wagons run by private operators.

NBSTC

There are 33 routes where the buses of North Bengal State Transport Corporation ply in the district.

There are 86 buses plying in the district which are operated by private owners. Out of them, 7 (seven) buses are run on temporary permits. Private operators

The *hāt* bus service is peculiar to this district owing to the existence of a large number of *hāts* (weekly markets at particular places) at various places. These *hāt* buses are used exclusively by the local traders (*hāt bepāries*). These buses are permitted to ply to the particular *hāts* from their notified garages approved by the Regional Transport Authority. They are not allowed to take passengers from midway. The *hāt* buses are treated as contract carriage. There are 74 *hāt* buses plying in the district for the different *hāts* allotted by the RTA. The existing *hāt* buses are not sufficient to meet the demand of the *hāt bepāries* (traders) of the district, as a result of which overcrowding including roof-top travelling is chronic in the Duārs area on Sundays which are traditional *hāt* days. It is a fact that the overcrowding is more acute in *hāt* buses than the stage carriages. Hāt bus

260 taxis including 7 station wagons run in this district from different places. The RTA sanctioned 50 taxi permits in the last part of 1972. The permits were sanctioned mostly to unemployed persons. Out of these permits 21 taxis have already been placed on the road and are part of the total of 260 taxis. Most of the taxis ply from Jalpāiguri to Siliguri and Jalpāiguri to Haldibāri (in Koch Bihār district) with their stand near Kadamtalā in Jalpāiguri town. Besides the Jalpāiguri stand, taxis are also available at the following places, namely, Maynāguri, Gairkātā, Bānarhat, Māl, Birpārā, Falakata, Hasimara, Kalchini and Ālipur Duār. Taxi (Contract Carriage)

The issue of permits for 50 two-seated auto-rickshaws is under consideration of the RTA of which 25 will be for Sadar Sub-division and 25 for Ālipur Duārs Subdivision. Necessary arrangement is under way. Auto-rickshaw

The different categories of vehicles registered in this district are as stated below :

(1) Stage Carriages	—	86
(2) Contract Carriages		
(taxi 260 ; <i>hāt</i> bus 274)	—	534

(3) Private carriers	—	1,908
(4) Public carriers	—	1,627
(5) Private cars & jeeps	—	3,582

EARLY RAIL ROADS

Northern Bengal
State Railway

The early rail roads traversed the district for journeys to Dārjiling and for catering to the needs of the growing tea industry. The southern section of the Eastern Bengal State Railway, which was called the Northern Bengal State Railway, opened its metre gauge line on 28 August 1887 from Ātrāi to Jalpāiguri. It was extended from Porādaha to Bherāmārā Ghāt on 19 January 1878 and from Sara Ghāt to Ātrāi on that very day. It was further extended from Jalpāiguri to Siliguri on 10 June 1878. It was part of the through passage from Calcutta to Dārjiling. Prior to its opening, travellers bound for Dārjiling went by rail to Sāhibganj on the bank of the Gaṅgā and after crossing the river undertook a long journey by road from Kārāgolā Ghāt to Siliguri. This railway entered the Koch Bihār district near Haldibāri station and in a northerly direction went to Jalpāiguri where it curved to the north-west. It served the whole of the track to the west of the Tistā. At that time, there were the following railway stations on that line falling within the district, namely, Mondalghāt, Jalpāiguri and Belākobā. At the time of the partition of 1947, a big slice of this railway fell within East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The present broad gauge line between New Jalpāiguri and Jalpāiguri within the district is a remnant of that old railway.

Bengal Duārs
Railway

The Bengal Duārs Railway on the metre gauge was opened to serve the growing tea industry. In 1891, the Government of India entered into an agreement with Octavius Steel for opening this railway. It was agreed upon that the railway would run from Bārnes, in the eastern bank of Tistā and to the opposite side of Jalpāiguri, to Dām-Dim and that there would also be a branch from Lātāguri to Ramshāihāt on the western bank of the Jaldhākā. It was also agreed upon that in future the line would run over a bridge on the Jaldhākā to the East from Ramshaihat. The company was supplied with cost-free land, slippers for the track and free use of the ferry service between Jalpāiguri in Bārnesghāt.

The following list shows the dates on which the different sections of this railway were opened.

From	To	Distance (miles)	Year of opening
Bārnes	Dām-Dim	31	1893
Lātāguri	Rāmshāihāt	5½	"
Bārnes	Lālmanirhāt (now in Bangladesh)	66	1900
Bārnes	Bārnesghāt	1	"
Dām-Dim	Bāgrākot	7	1902
Māl	Mādārihāt	44	1903
Chālsā	Matiāli	5	1915

Eastward expansion of the railway could not be conceived of owing to the huge cost involved in the construction of the bridge over the Jaldhākā. At present, the only remnants of the railway are the sections Lātāguri-Rāmshāi and Lataguri-New Māl Junction. The Barnes-Bārnesghāt branch was washed away in the Tistā flood of 1910; no train plies on Chālsā-Matiāli section at present. A large part of the Bārnes-Lālmanirhāt section has gone to East Pakistan (Bangladesh) at the time of the partition.

The Cooch Behār State Railway started functioning from the western side of the Torsā river to Gitaldoha in narrow gauge from 1891. The section between Koch Bihār and Ālipur Duār was opened in 1900 after constructing a bridge over the Kāl jāni river at a cost of Rs. 66,519. The line was extended to Rājābhāt-khāwā in 1901 and to Jayanti the same year. The latter portion was converted into metre gauge in 1910 and was merged with the Eastern Bengal State Railway. The metre gauge from Rājābhāt-khāwā to Hāsimārā was extended in 1914.

The Assam Link Railway project was taken up after Independence to connect Assam with the rest of India. The table at the next page shows how different railways were connected in the project.

Cooch Behār
State Railway

PRESENT POSITION
Assam Link
Railway

As the Assam Link Railway was a metre gauge one, it was thought that a broad gauge should also be laid in the area. At first, passengers had to alight at Farākkā and to ferry over the Gaṅgā to Khejuriā ghāt on the other side. Now the Railway passes over the Farākkā barrage and from New Jalpāiguri station it enters the district. The line passes through Belākobā, Rāninagar, crosses the Tistā to the North of Jalpāiguri town and

Broad Gauge
Railway

From	To	Gauge	Railway	Remarks
Calcutta	Sakrigali ghāt	broad	E.I.R.	Passengers were ferried over the Gāngā to Manihārighāt
Manihārighāt	Kishanganj	metre	"	Old line
Kishanganj	Siliguri	"	D.H.R.	The existing narrow gauge was converted into a metre gauge
Siliguri	Bāgrākot	"	new line	A bridge was built over the Tistā at Sivok for the lines
Bāgrākot	Mādārihāt	"	B.D.R.	A bridge was built over the Torsā for the line
Mādārihāt	Hāsimārā	"	new line	Hāsimārā station of the Cooch Behār State Railway was converted into New Hāsimārā Station
Hāsimārā	Ālipur Duār Jn.	"	Cooch Behār State Railway	Ālipur Duār Jn. Station was built between Damanpur and Ālipur Duār Court stations of the Cooch Behār State Railway
Ālipur Duār Jn.	Fakiragram Jn.	"	new line	A bridge was constructed over the Sankosh in 1950. Jorāi is the last station within West Bengal



enters Koch Bihār district after touching Maynāguri, Dhupguri and Fālākātā stations. The New Cooch Behār station was formerly constructed between Cooch Behār and Baneswar railway stations of the former Cooch Behār State Railway. The line then proceeds to Ālipur Duār after crossing the Kāl jāni over a bridge. New Ālipur Duār became the new station on the broad gauge. This line runs parallel to the metre gauge Assam link over the Sankosh and up to Fakirāgrām Jn. Much of the broad gauge, unlike the Assam link, had to be laid out afresh. The district made available about 2,384 acres of land to construct this railway at a cost of about Rs. 80 lakhs. Trains began to ply on this line from January 1964.

All the railways in the district are now under the North-east Frontier railway.

The broad gauge (main line) from New Jalpāiguri to New Bongāigāon (in Assam) passes through the following stations, namely, Ambāri Falakata, Belākobā, Rāninagar-Jalpāiguri, Jalpāiguri Road, New Domohāni, New Maynāguri, Betgāra, Altagrām, Dhupguri, Kholālgrām, Salbāri, Khirerkote, Falakata and Gumāni Hāt. It also touches New Ālipur Duār, Samuktala and Kāmākhyāguri stations.

The metre gauge (main line) from Kātihār Junction proceeds to Kāmākhyāguri touching on its way several stations within the district, namely, Bāgrākot, Oodlābāri, Dam-Dim, New Mal Jn., Chālsā Jn., Chāprāmāry, Nagrakata, Caron, Chengmāri, Bānārhat, Binnāguri, Dalgaon, Mujnai, Madarihat, Hasimara, Hamiltonganj, Kālchīni, Gāropāra, Rajabhatkhawa Jn., Damanpur, Ālipur Duār Jn., Salsalabāri, Sāmuktalā Road and Chepāni Hat.

The broad gauge (branch line) from New Jalpāiguri to Jalpāiguri passing through Ambāri Falakata, Belākobā, Rāninagar-Jalpāiguri and Mohitnagar extended to Haldibāri in Koch Bihār district but at present trains are not running to Moṇḍalghāt and Haldibāri.

Trains running on the metre gauge (branch line) from New Māl Junction to Chāngrābāndhā in Koch Bihar district now stop at Lātāguri Junction and do not proceed ahead to Changrabandha via Domohani, Maynāguri Road and Bhotepatti. A solitary train runs on the metre gauge (branch line) from Lātāguri Junction to

Rāmshāi. A solitary train also runs on the metre gauge (branch line) from Rajabhatkhawa Jn. to Jayanti touching Buxā Road on its way. The metre gauge (branch line) from Ālipur Duār Junction to Bāmanhāt in Koch Bihār district touches Ālipur Duār Court and Ālipur Duār stations.

TRADE

The principal commodities for outward booking are jute, timber, tea, tobacco, live-stock and vegetables, while the principal imports of the district by rail are food-grains, textiles, medicines, Kerosene, iron and steel, salt, sugar and other consumer goods.

WATERWAYS
AND FERRIES

Although there are many rivers and streams in the district, few of them are fit for navigation. Only the Tistā, the Duduyā, and the Mujnai, the Kālajāni and the Torsā are navigable for a short distance and the last one only during the rains. River trade is very insignificant since the merchants prefer to send their goods by rail. There are at present 78 public ferries controlled by the Zillā Parishad.

TRAVEL AND
TOURIST
FACILITIES

Transport facilities available in this district have been described earlier in the chapter. Almost all important places in the district are connected by a network of bus services. Such services even extend beyond the border of the district to the adjoining districts of Dārjiling and Koch Bihār. For a short travel cycle-rickshaws serve as the most convenient transport and are available in almost all important places of interest. Taxis are mostly available at Ālipur Duār, Banārhāt, Birpara, Falakata, Gairkata, Hasimara, Jalpāiguri, Kālchini, Māl and Maynāguri.

The Jalpāiguri Zillā Parishad maintains one Dak bungalow and six inspection bungalows, the particulars of which are given below :

Name of the bungalows	Location	Accommodation
Sadar Dak bungalow	Jalpāiguri town, near Jalpāiguri Railway Station	6 rooms (double-seated) with attached sanitary latrine and bath.

Name of the bungalows	Location	Accommodation
Bataigole Inspection bungalow	Māl P.S., on 1st mile of Mal-Baradighi Rd.	2 rooms (double-seated) with attached sanitary latrine and bath.
Dhupguri Inspection bungalow	Dhupguri P.S., on the 1st mile of Dhupguri-Falakata Road	Do
Maynāguri Inspection bungalow	Maynāguri P.S., near Maynaguri new market and State bus depot	Do
Fālākātā Inspection bungalow	Fālākātā P.S., on the 1st mile of Falakata-Madarihat Road	Do
Ālipur Duār Inspection bungalow	Ālipur Duār town, near Chowpathi	2 rooms (1 with 3 seats, 1 with 2 seats) with attached sanitary latrine and bath.
Kumārgrām Inspection bungalow	Kumārgram P.S.	2 rooms in 1st floor with 1 seat in each room.

There are three *dharmaśālās* in Jalpāiguri town.

Titālia Extra Departmental Branch Office (now in Bangladesh) being in existence since 1849 may be considered to be the oldest Post Office in the Jalpāiguri district as it then existed. The composition of Jalpāiguri Postal Division has undergone several changes since its formation. Before 1905 the Division comprised Jalpāiguri, Darjiling and Koch Bihār revenue districts. Consequent on the partition of Bengal in 1905 during the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon, Jalpāiguri was transferred to the newly created province of Assam. As a result of the revision of the territorial boundaries during the regime of Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy, Jalpāiguri Postal Division was reformed and named as Jalpāiguri & Sikkim-Tibet Postal division from 1 April 1914. Several

POST AND
TELEGRAPHS

changes were made in 1916, 1928 and 1934. The Jalpāiguri Postal Division now comprises the two revenue districts of Jalpāiguri and Koch Bihār.

There were 123 Post Offices including 32 Telegraph Offices before the 1st Five Year Plan in the district of Jalpāiguri, namely, 1 Head Office, 17 Sub-Offices and 105 Branch Offices.

During the first and second Five year Plans, the number of new post offices opened in the district was 33 and 18 respectively. At the end of the Second plan period the position of the P.O.s was as follows : 1 H.O., 49 S.O.s and 124 B.O.s. As on 31 March 1976, there were a total of 443 post offices in the district. Besides, 41 post offices have telegraphic arrangements. A list of these telegraph offices is given below :

JALPĀIGURI SADAR SUBDIVISION

Jalpāiguri Head P.O., Bānārhāt, Binnaguri, Carron, Dām-Dim, Dīnbāzār, Domohani, Dhupguri, Chālsā, Gairkata, Gopalbagan, Jalpāiguri Court, Lātāguri, Māl, Maynāguri, Matiali, Manabari, Nagrakata, Prasannanagar, Rāmjhōrā, Rājganj, Syli Hāt.

ĀLIPUR DUĀRS SUBDIVISION

Ālipur Duār, Ālipur Duār Junction, Ālipur Duār Court, Buxā-duār, Dalsingpārā, Falakata, Hamiltonganj, Hāsimarā, Hadipārā, Kālchini, Kumārgrām, Kāmākhyaguri, Newlands, Panabasti, Rajabhatkhawa, Santālpur, Madarihat, Birpārā, Jaleswar.

As on 31 March 1976, the number of post offices having telegraphic arrangement increased to 60.

All the important places of the district have telephone facilities. Here is a list of the telephone exchanges functioning in the district.

Name of exchange	Capacity
Jalpāiguri	840 lines
Ālipur Duār	300 ..
Bānārhāt	200 ..

Name of exchange	Capacity
Birpārā	150 lines
Māl	200 ..
Hāsimārā	100 ..
Maynāguri	100 ..
Nāgrākātā	100 ..
Oodlābāri	100 ..
Fālākātā	50 ..
Kālchini	50 ..
Matiāli	50 ..

There are three associations of transport owners, namely, North Bengal Motor Transport Association, Jalpāiguri District Bus Association and Jalpāiguri District Truck Owners' Association. The offices of these associations are located at Jalpāiguri town. Besides, there is another association of the truck owners which is named Jalpāiguri-Siliguri Truck Owners' Association. Its office is located at Siliguri. The names of the associations of the transport workers are (i) North Bengal Transport Workers' Union, Jalpāiguri. (ii) North Bengal Motor Karmī Sangha, Maynāguri, (iii) Automobile Workers' Association, Ālipur Duār and (iv) Bhāratīya Motor Karmī Sangha, Jalpāiguri.

ORGANIZATIONS
OF TRANSPORT
OWNERS AND
EMPLOYEES

सत्यमेव जयते

CHAPTER VIII

MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

There are a good number of public servants both of the Central and the State Governments posted in the district. The Census of 1961 returned 2.37 persons as against 4.79 for the State to be in the administrative departments of the Central and State Governments of the district per 1,000 of the total population in both cases. The police force in the district had a strength of 1.15 per 1,000 total population of the district in 1961 as against 1.45 per 1,000 of total population in the State. The State Government employees numbered 8,321 (8,075 males and 246 females) in all in 1966. The percentage of female employees to the district total was 3.0 that year. The following table records the number of the State Government employees by emolument groups as on 31 March 1966.

NO. OF STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES IN JALPAIGURI
DISTRICT : 1966

Emolument Groups	Number
Rs.	
1 — 75	776
76 — 100	2,355
101 — 150	2,851
151 — 200	1,026
201 — 250	568
251 — 300	320
301 — 400	256
401 — 500	65
501 — 700	57
701 — 1,000	21
1,000 +	26
	<hr/>
	8,321

MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION

The Jalpāiguri municipality was constituted in 1885 and that of Ālipur Duār in 1957. There are also other local bodies like the Zillā Parishad, Ānchalik Parishad, etc. of which a detailed account has been given in another chapter. As on 31 March

1968, the total employees in the local bodies of the district numbered 510, consisting of 8 persons in administrative and supervisory work, 31 in technical work, 103 in clerical and 368 in inferior services.

The two municipalities had a total number of 437 employees on 31 March 1965. The categories of employees there were as follows : administrative and supervisory 6, technical 17, clerical 88, others 326. They were paid Rs. 42,633 as total monthly emoluments, the per capita monthly earning being Rs. 97.56.

The distribution of employees according to the monthly emoluments was as listed in the table below.

EMPLOYEES BY EMOLUMENT GROUP IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF
JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 31 MARCH 1965

Below		Between			
Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
75	75—99	100—149	150—199	200—299	300—399
298	14	72	31	19	3

The Jalpāiguri Zillā Parishad had a total of 84 employees on 31 March 1965 ; 2 being in the administrative and supervisory category, 19 in the technical, 19 in the clerical and 44 in the inferior categories. The total monthly emoluments paid to them during the aforesaid month was Rs. 13,049, the per capita monthly earning being Rs. 155.35. There were 21 employees getting a monthly emoluments below Rs. 75 and 23 in Rs. 75—99. 7 in Rs. 100—149, 4 in Rs. 150—199, 26 in Rs. 200—299, 1 in Rs. 300—399, 1 in Rs. 500—749 and 1 in Rs. 750—999 groups.

ZILLĀ PARISHAD
ADMINISTRATION

The table at the next page shows the distribution of employees in the two municipalities and the Zillā Parishad of the district on 31 March 1965.

Workers grouped under 'Other services' meant the largest group of persons outside the agricultural sector according to the Census. The services included both public and personal services, educational, medical, religious, legal services and also business services, community services and recreation services. In the district, such people taken together numbered 46,886 (including 42,908 males) in 1961. Such workers formed 53.50 per cent and 51.23 per cent of the total workers respectively in 1961 and 1971.

In 1961, there were 235 teachers in the urban areas and 54 in the district as a whole per 10,000 of the population of age

LEARNED
PROFESSIONS

EMPLOYEES BY CATEGORIES IN THE LOCAL BODIES OF
JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 31 MARCH 1965

Category	No. employed		Total monthly emoluments		Per capita monthly earnings	
	In municipalities	In Zilla Parishad	In municipalities Rs.	In Zilla Parishad Rs.	In municipalities Rs.	In Zilla Parishad Rs.
Administrative & Supervisory	6	2	933	1,428	155.50	714.00
Technical	17	19	3,492	4,114	205.41	216.53
Clerical	88	19	13,434	4,308	152.66	226.74
Others including peons, cleaners, sweepers, etc.	326	44	24,774	3,199	75.99	72.70

below 20. The number of physicians, surgeons and dentists was also 49 for the urban areas and 8 for the entire district per 10,000 population of the district in 1961. During the same period the para-medical staff like the nurses, pharmacists, etc. was 29 in the urban areas and 7 in the entire district per 10,000 of the population. In absolute figures in 1961, the physicians numbered 1,132 in the district of whom only 9 were females. Of them, 607 were in the urban areas. The Ayurvedic physicians numbered 236, including 5 females. Of them, 115 were in the urban areas. The homoeopathic physicians numbered 283, of whom 203 were in the urban areas at that time. Surgeons and dentists numbered 371, of whom 231 were in the urban areas. Nurses, pharmacists, etc. numbered 896, including 356 in the urban areas. Teachers numbered 3,699 in the district in 1961; of them 785 were in secondary schools, 1,976 in middle and primary schools and 720 were other teachers. Jurists numbered 110 in the district. Architects, Engineers and Surveyors numbered 372 in the district.

Domestic and personal services are those services which are rendered to households by domestic servants, cooks, etc. Though the agricultural people of the district do not ordinarily keep many domestic servants nor have they the means to do so, still we have had returns of such working people according to the Census of 1961. In that year, there were governesses, tutors and private secretaries to the extent of 2.18 in the district as against 3.32 in the State per 1,000 households. The domestic servants and cooks in the district were to the extent of 27.22 as against 41.91 in the State per 1,000 households during that years. Thus it appears that on the average there was one domestic servant and/or cook per 40 households in the district. Governesses, tutors and private secretaries are not returned as such in the Census records unless they are engaged full-time in such avocations. On many occasions, persons doing these jobs on a part-time basis had been counted in their main avocations. The full-time workers may have been found in tea-gardens and elsewhere where no other job was available to such workers.

The tailors and cutters in the district numbered 1,603 in 1961. Dress makers numbered 1,531. Barbers and hairdressers numbered 1,338 during the same period. There were 6,028 domestic servants in the district in 1961.

A list of registered labour organisations of the district has been given in the Appendix.

DOMESTIC AND
PERSONAL
SERVICES

LABOUR
ORGANISATIONS

APPENDIX

LABOUR ORGANISATIONS (BOTH OF EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES)
IN THE JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1972

Regd. No.	Name	Address
10802	Ālipur Duār Mahakumā Byābasāyee Samiti	R.S.P. Office, P.O. Ālipur Duār.
5404	Ālipur Duār Municipal Employees' Association	P.O. Ālipur Duār.
4136	Ālipur Duār Rice & Oil Mills Mazdoor Union	P.O. Ālipur Duār.
5635	Ālipur Duār Shop Employees' Association	P.O. Ālipur Duār.
4013	Automobile Workers' Association	P.O. Ālipur Duār.
5059	Bhāratīya Motor Karmī Sangha	Congress Bhavan, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
2900	Biḍi Mazdoor Samity	P.O. Dinbāzār.
6474	Biḍi Mazdoor Union	P.O. Ālipur Duār.
7679	Biḍi Mazdur Union	Brāhmo Samāj Road, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
1727	Byābasāyee Karmachārī Samiti	P.O. Jalpāiguri.
5734	Byābasāyee Samiti	P.O. Dhupguri.
10936	Chā Bāgān Mazdoor Union, West Bengal	Ukilpārā, P. O. Jalpāi- guri.
7436	Chā Mazdoor Congress	P.O. Nāgrākātā.
4533	Cooch Behār-Jalpāiguri Biḍi Workers' Union	Kalhalguri, Jalpāiguri.
1083	Dhewlāghorā Tea Estate Union	Dhewlāghorā Tea Estate, Jalpāiguri.
4670	Divisional Insurance Employees' Association	P.O. Jalpāiguri.
6993	Duārs Chāy Mazdoor Union	Temple Street, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
7941	Duārs Chiā Kaman Sramik Sangha	P.O. Dalsingpārā Bāzār.
6020	Duārs Tea Estate Subordinate Staff Union Congress	P.O. Matelli.
1615	Duārs Chā Bāgān Workers' Union	P.O. Ālipur Duār.
8841	Duārs Khān Mazdur Union	P.O. Kālchini.

Regd. No.	Name	Address
7565	Electric Supply Works' Union Union	P.O. Jalpāiguri.
8583	Forest Mazdur Union	P.O. Māl.
3167	Ghāt Mazdur Union	Kānti Kutir, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
2921	Jalpāiguri Chā Bāgān Karmachārī Samiti	P.O. Jalpāiguri.
9335	Jalpāiguri Chā Mazdur Union	P.O. Birpārā.
2338	Jalpāiguri District Merchant Association	P.O. Dinbāzār.
5776	Jalpāiguri Division Insurance Field Workers' Association	P.O. Jalpāiguri.
4957	Jalpāiguri Forest Mazdoor Union	P.O. Kālchini.
3101	Jalpāiguri Municipal Employees' Association	P.O. Jalpāiguri.
8334	Jalpāiguri Municipal Employees' Union	Jalpāiguri Municipal Office, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
7686	Jalpāiguri Rice & Oil Mill Sramik Union	P.O. Dhupguri.
3128	Jalpāiguri Rickshaw Mazdur Union	Kadamtalā, P.O. Jal- pāiguri.
6245	Jalpāiguri Zillā Kishān Congress	Odlalien, P.O. Manā- bāri.
5733	Kālchini Rickshaw Paddlers' Union	P.O. Kālchini.
9518	Life Insurance Employees' Association	Jalpāiguri Division, Naren Villa, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
1800	Magheroabi Damanpur Chā Bāgān Mazdur Union	P.O. Ālipur Duār.
5182	National Union of Plantation Workers, West Bengal	P.O. Birpārā.
8230	New Jalpāiguri Merchants' Union	Bhakti Nagar, P.O. New Jalpāiguri.
10066	North Bengal Bus Transport Workers' Union	P.O. Nāgrākātā.
5838	North Bengal Chamber of Commercial Industries Employees' Union	P.O. Jalpāiguri.

Regd. No.	Name	Address
10907	North Bengal Forest Sramik Congress	Damanpur, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
9977	North Bengal Forest Workers' & Jagir Cultivators' Union	P.O. Ālipur Duār.
7611	North Bengal Motor Karmī Sangha (Bus Worker)	P.O. Maynāguri.
4451	North Bengal Press Employees' Union	Deśbandhu Chittaranjan Road, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
5656	North Bengal Rājmistri Labour Union	Kāmārpārā, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
10908	North Bengal Timber Merchants Employees' Union	Damanpur, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
10040	Premier Timber Co. Workers' Union	P.O. Ālipur Duār.
4213	Press Workers' Union	P.O. Ālipur Duār.
5839	Rashtrīya Chā Mazdoor Congress	P.O. Jalpāiguri.
2665	Rashtrīya Chā Mazdur Congress, Jalpāiguri	P.O. Jalpāiguri.
5932	Rashtrīya Washermen Congress	P.O. Nāgrākātā.
8058	Sardār Chā Office Karmachārī Union	C/o CD4, Mahantapur, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
4561	Tea Garden Indian Employees' Association	P.O. Kālchini.
1688	Tea Planters' Samiti	P.O. Nāgrākātā.
4808	Teraī Chā Bāgān Mazdoor Union	Mukareandapuri, P.O. Siliguri.
6070	The Jalpāiguri Kerosene Hawkers' Union	Municipal Market, P.O. Jalpāiguri.
7247	West Bengal Chā Mazdoor Sabha	P.O. Māl.
10140	West Bengal Chā Sramik Congress	P.O. Damanpur, Jalpāiguri.
2233	West Bengal Chā Sramik Union	P.O. Jalpāiguri.
6625	West Bengal Tea Employees' Association	P.O. Chālsā.
2785	Zillā Chā Bāgān Workers' Union	P.O. Māl.

CHAPTER IX

ECONOMIC TRENDS

The Census of 1971 divides the general population of the district into two broad categories of workers and non-workers of which the former comprises the following nine livelihood classes: (I) Cultivator, (II) Agricultural labourer, (III) Live-stock, forestry, fishing, hunting and plantations, orchards and allied activities, (IV) Mining and quarrying, (V) Manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairs: (a) Household industry, (b) Other than household industry, (VI) Construction, (VII) Trade and Commerce, (VIII) Transport, storage and communications and (IX) Other services.

The distribution of the total population of the district, according to the above classification, is given in the following table.

COMPOSITION OF LIVELIHOOD CLASSES IN THE
JALP IGURI DISTRICT

Category No.	Description	Number of		
		Persons	Males	Females
I-IX	Total No. of persons enumerated	17,50,159	9,27,707	8,22,452
I-IX	Total workers	5,44,686	4,62,066	82,620
I	Cultivators	2,16,712	2,11,552	5,160
II	Agricultural labourers	55,694	51,512	4,182
III	Live-stock, forestry, etc.	1,53,367	88,821	64,546
IV	Mining and quarrying	509	369	140
V	Manufacturing, processing, etc.			
	(a) Household industry	8,716	7,824	892
	(b) Other than household industry	14,691	13,979	712
VI	Construction	3,191	3,056	135
VII	Trade and Commerce	29,768	29,166	602
VIII	Transport, storage and communications	18,949	18,388	561
IX	Other services	43,089	37,399	5,690
	Non-workers	12,05,473	4,65,641	7,39,832

The statement below indicates the percentages of workers and non-workers together with the percentages of workers belonging to different livelihood classes.

PERCENTAGES OF WORKERS AND NON-WORKERS

District	Total	Livelihood Classes											Non-workers
		Total	I	II	III	IV	Va	Vb	VI	VII	VIII	IX	
		31.12	12.38	3.18	8.77	.03	.50	.84	.18	1.70	1.08	2.46	
													68.88

In 1971, the workers constituted 31.12% of the total population of the district as against 38.44% in 1961. Thus, during the decade, 1961-71, there was a reduction in the proportion of workers by 7.32%. In 1961 the number of agricultural workers in the district was 2,42,738, cultivators and share-croppers being 2,27,314 and agricultural labourers 15,424. The corresponding number in 1971 was 2,72,406 of which 2,16,712 were cultivators and 55,694 agricultural labourers. Thus, during the same decade, there was a decrease of 4.7% in the category of cultivators and an increase of 26% in that of agricultural labourers. This growth in the ranks of agricultural labourers is disproportionate to the normal growth of population.

GENERAL LEVEL OF PRICES

In 1859-60, the price of best rice varied from 75 to 87 paise a maund and that of common rice from 50 to 62 paise a maund. Best paddy was sold at prices ranging from 25 to 37 paise a maund and common paddy from 12 to 25 paise a maund. By 1870, prices had nearly trebled; best rice sold at from Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3 a maund, and common rice at from Re. 1 to Rs. 1.50 a maund. The average price of common rice for the period 1893-1902 was about Rs. 3 a maund. There was little change in the next three years, but in 1906 the price rose to about Rs. 4.50 a maund and 1908 to Rs. 5 a maund.¹ By 1912, the price came down again and varied between Rs. 3.25 and Rs. 3.81 a maund in January and September respectively. For the next three years the price rise was continuous and reached the height of Rs. 6.66 a maund in 1915. This was followed by a gradual fall during the next three years when in 1918 the price per maund ranged between Rs. 3.76 in January and Rs. 4.66 in

¹ J. F. Gruning—*East Bengal and Assam Gazetteers : Jalpaiguri*, Allahabad, 1911. p. 97.

(1 maund is equivalent to 37.38 Kilograms.)

September. In 1919 the fluctuation in the price was much wide, being about Rs. 5.48 per maund in January and about Rs. 11.43 in September. In 1920, it averaged Rs. 9 a maund. Except for the years 1922-23, when it registered perceptible decline and ranged between Rs. 5.50 and about Rs. 6 a maund the price of common rice ruling for the period 1924-27 is marked by gradual rise culminating in over Rs. 8 a maund in September 1927. This was again followed by gradual recession in price since 1928 and by 1935 the price declined to as low a level as Rs. 2.88 a maund in January and Rs. 3.33 a maund in September 1935. The next five years (1936-40) witnessed an upward trend. Though the process was slow at the outset, it became rapid since 1941 when the price per maund was Rs. 5 in January and Rs. 6.67 in September. In 1947, it rose to Rs. 13.36 in January and Rs. 20 in September and further to Rs. 32 in September 1950, reaching the climax in October 1951 when the prices ruling were Rs. 53.33 per maund at Jalpāiguri and Rs. 68.00 per maund at Ālipur Duār. With the harvesting of the winter crop at the end of 1951 the prices began to come down and the trend continued till 1955, but started spiralling again from the following year. The average price per maund in the district was Rs. 33.63 in 1952, Rs. 24.25 in 1953, Rs. 19.10 in 1954, Rs. 18.84 in 1955, Rs. 21.50 in 1956, Rs. 23.44 in 1957 and Rs. 27.94 in 1958. The index number of retail prices for food articles as also the consumer price index numbers for different expenditure levels registered in consequence progressive rise, as the following table¹ (A & B) would indicate.

TABLE—A

INDEX NUMBER OF RETAIL PRICES FOR FOOD ARTICLES

(Base : November 1950-100)

Centre : Jalpāiguri

	February				October			
	1956	1961	1966	1971	1956	1961	1966	1971
Food articles								
Rice	79	97	153	209	100	107	242	264
Rice products	58	84	140	142	79	89	177	207
Wheat products	80	78	97	154	83	79	99	160

Contd.

¹ Source: Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Government of West Bengal.

	February				October			
	1956	1961	1966	1971	1956	1961	1966	1971
Food articles								
<i>Mung</i>	81	93	149	195	77	93	172	264
<i>Masur</i>	96	82	144	171	82	82	160	265
<i>Kalāi</i>	84	102	178	278	94	127	159	278
Other pulses	64	80	139	174	72	75	142	200
Mustard oil	60	105	139	219	98	95	166	232
Salt	74	123	121	214	92	123	129	357
Spices	67	133	226	283	71	138	236	272
Sugar	100	129	146	202	105	126	153	246
<i>Gur</i>	92	83	100	129	67	100	145	296
Milk	68	75	100	175	62	88	175	150
<i>Ghee</i>	—	167	187	218	150	167	201	218
Potatoes	38	48	62	92	118	123	126	182
Onion	106	114	108	128	88	116	131	214
Other non-leafy vegetables	53	85	61	109	68	106	114	160
Leafy vegetables	52	85	83	134	121	194	194	246
Fish	78	132	209	254	111	204	210	267
Meat	70	82	109	131	70	93	109	132
Egg	64	85	108	157	71	118	135	180

TABLE—B

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBERS

(Base : November 1950 = 100)

Centre : Jalpāiguri

Monthly expenditure level in rupee

Year	1-100	101-200	201-350	351-700	701 and above
1956	91.2	90.6	90.9	92.3	94.4
1961	105.6	105.1	105.3	106.1	106.6
1966	153.1	157.6	153.2	146.3	136.6
1971	193.0	195.0	189.3	178.7	162.4

The following table¹ indicating the prices of various agricultural produce during the agronomically significant months of January and September of 1961, 1971 and 1973 reflects this general trend.

— Not available

¹ Source : Directorate of Agricultural Marketing, Government of West Bengal.

WHOLESALE PRICES OF SELECTED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN SOME IMPORTANT
MARKETS OF JALPAIGURI DISTRICT

(Rupees per quintal)

Commodity	Market	1961		1966		1971		1973	
		January	September	January	September	January	September	January	September
Paddy (fine)	Dhupguri	43.55	38.46	—	—	77.00	103.33	78.75	—
Paddy (common <i>bagra</i>)	Dhupguri	29.99	—	—	—	66.50	102.27	76.25	—
Paddy (common <i>bagra</i>)	Sāmuktālā	32.83	—	—	—	68.15	99.58	68.63	—
Rice (fine)	Dhupguri	—	—	—	—	116.00	170.00	130.00	—
Rice (superfine)	Jalpāiguri	—	—	—	—	151.00	209.00	185.00	—
Rice (fine)	Jalpāiguri	77.72	—	—	—	135.00	179.50	145.00	—
Rice (common <i>bagra</i>)	Jalpāiguri	53.60	—	—	—	122.60	154.50	133.75	—
Rice (common <i>bagra</i>)	Ālipur Duār	57.89	—	—	—	118.20	162.50	130.00	—
Mung (ordinary)	Jalpāiguri	75.71	77.72	131.60	139.50	123.00	190.00	305.00	—
<i>Masur</i> (big)	Jalpāiguri	57.94	56.55	115.60	114.00	160.60	190.00	190.00	—
Potato (local)	Jalpāiguri	28.14	—	35.60	74.25	62.50	—	52.50	—
Mustard seed	Jalpāiguri	—	—	—	—	—	187.50	150.00	—
Mustard seed	Ālipur Duār	78.39	82.54	114.40	152.00	148.75	—	161.67	—
Mustard seed	Fālākātā	—	80.40	115.00	150.00	146.00	—	143.33	—
Tobacco (Matihari)	Dhupguri	349.07	265.32	—	356.25	442.00	357.00	712.50	—
	Ālipur Duār	410.71	300.16	438.00	352.50	—	—	—	—
	Fālākātā	408.03	306.59	439.20	361.25	—	394.33	—	—
Jute (Average grade)	Dhupguri	131.32	84.15	127.50	131.25	115.00	115.00	152.50	—
	Delākobā	142.71	95.41	134.40	139.00	139.00	141.67	151.25	—
	Fālākātā	131.99	83.08	132.40	119.75	111.75	105.00	165.63	—

— Not available.

RURAL WAGES

The casual nature of agricultural employment is responsible for reducing wages on an average to a low level. Then there are differences in the wages paid to men, women and children depending upon the nature and importance of the work. While men are engaged for all agricultural operations, women and children are mostly engaged in transplanting and harvesting. The following table gives the average daily earnings of different categories of agricultural labourers during the years 1961, 1966 and 1973.¹

Year	Normal daily working hours	Field labourers (Rs. per day)			Other agricultural labourers (Rs. per day)			Herdsman (Rs. per animal per month)		
		Man	Woman	Child	Man	Woman	Child	Man	Woman	Child
1961	8	2.34	1.48	1.15	2.58	1.58	1.08	2.08	—	1
1966	8	3.24	2.29	1.69	3.24	2.48	1.88	2.66	2.46	1.75
1973	8	4.03	3.54	—	4.03	3.58	—	3.00	—	1

The average monthly earnings of labourers engaged in tea plantation were, as stated by Gruning in 1911, Rs. 6 for men, Rs. 4.50 to Rs. 5 for women and Rs. 2.50 to 3 for children.² Payment was usually made on the *hāzīrā* system. After completion of the first *hāzīrā* a worker was free to undertake a second task, known as *doubli*, and paid at the same rate. During 1939-44 the *hāzīrā* rate for men, women and children was 0.25, 0.19 and 0.12 paise respectively.³ Dearness allowance was for the first time introduced in 1941. The total daily earnings including dearness allowances stood at 0.87, 0.75 and 0.44 paise respectively for men, women and children in 1947.⁴ Prior to 1951, minimum wages in this industry were fixed at the instance of the employers and also through the Industrial Committee on Plantation. In 1951, the State Government for the first time fixed the minimum wages for workers in the industry in pursuance of the Minimum Wages Act of 1948, the rates prescribed being Rs. 1.19, Rs. 1.06 and Rs. 0.62 paise daily for men, women

¹ Source : Directorate of Agriculture, Government of West Bengal.

² J. F. Gruning—*op. cit.* p. 96.

³⁻⁴ *Jalpaiguri District Centenary Souvenir* (1869-1968), Jalpaiguri 1970, p. 302.

and children respectively. Since February 1953, wages are being fixed according to the size of the garden, namely, (i) 500 acres and above and (ii) below 500 acres. In August 1959, at the instance of the State Government, the workers employed in factories were granted wages at rates at which plantation workers were paid in gardens of 500 acres and above. In April 1966, the Central Wage Board on Tea Plantation recommended merger of *hāziri* and *doubli* into one single wage for the day and refixed daily wages at the following rates, (besides a dearness allowance at the rate of 5.8 paise per day for gardens of 500 acres and above): Rs. 2.13 for men, Rs. 1.96 for women and Rs. 1.15 for children; for gardens below 500 acres, Rs. 2.10 for men, Rs. 1.93 for women and Rs. 1.15 for children.¹ Other benefits include supply of cereals at Rs. 40.19 per quintal. The tripartite agreement reached in 1969 gave a further increase in the daily earnings of the workers which were Rs. 2.27 for men, Rs. 2.10 for women and Rs. 1.22 for children employed in gardens of 500 acres and above and Rs. 2.24 for men, Rs. 2.07 for women and Rs. 1.22 for children in gardens below 500 acres. Besides, a dearness allowance at the rate of 18 paise was granted to male and female workers and 9 paise to children irrespective of the size of the garden.² In 1972-73, the total daily earnings including dearness allowance of a male worker amounted to Rs. 3, that of a female worker to Rs. 2.83 and that of a child to Rs. 1.58 in gardens of 500 acres and above, the corresponding rates being Rs. 2.97, Rs. 2.83 and Rs. 1.58 in gardens below 500 acres.³ Supply of cereals at subsidized rate also continued.

It is not possible to give an idea of the family budgets of the well-to-do, the middle and the lower income groups throughout the district as sufficient information is lacking. But the following table giving monthly expenditure figures on various counts at Jalpāiguri will indicate the trend of family budgets of different expenditure groups during the period 1950-51 to 1966-67.⁴

FAMILY BUDGETS

¹ *ibid.* p. 305.

² *West Bengal Labour Gazette*, April, 1970. pp. 381-2.

³ *Tea Statistics (1972-73)*, published by the Indian Tea Board, p. 136.

⁴ Source : Director, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, Calcutta.

PERCENTAGE EXPENDITURE ON DIFFERENT GROUPS OF ITEMS
OF CONSUMPTION BY DIFFERENT EXPENDITURE LEVELS

Centre : Jalpāiguri

Groups or items of consumption	Average of Years	Monthly expenditure levels (in Rs.)				
		1-100	101-200	201-350	351-700	701 and above
Food	1950-51	62.37	65.64	63.21	52.09	35.87
	1955-56	65.10	60.67	55.74	47.23	39.12
	1960-61	68.09	66.92	62.13	55.97	51.18
	1966-67	71.80	70.81	62.06	56.89	50.42
Clothing	1950-51	5.71	5.96	5.89	5.18	4.25
	1955-56	7.55	7.15	8.17	7.91	7.80
	1960-61	7.49	7.66	7.64	7.66	8.06
	1966-67	5.54	7.07	6.75	6.83	7.06
Fuel & light	1950-51	7.49	6.34	5.33	3.93	3.05
	1955-56	7.05	6.15	4.59	4.62	3.70
	1960-61	7.15	5.47	4.96	4.94	4.79
	1966-67	9.20	5.93	5.03	3.55	3.26
Housing	1950-51	1.92	3.61	3.04	3.47	7.09
	1955-56	5.14	4.69	4.80	7.75	7.30
	1960-61	4.75	4.24	3.47	5.45	5.89
	1966-67	2.96	2.96	5.09	5.42	5.30
Miscellaneous	1950-51	22.51	18.45	22.53	35.33	49.74
	1955-56	15.16	21.34	26.70	32.49	42.08
	1960-61	12.52	15.71	21.80	25.98	30.08
	1966-67	10.50	13.23	21.07	27.31	33.96
Total	1950-51	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
	1955-56	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
	1960-61	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
	1966-67	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

EMPLOYMENT
EXCHANGE

The District Employment Exchange started functioning at Jalpāiguri in 1964 and exercised jurisdiction over the entire district till 1972. A separate exchange was established at Ālipur Duār in 1973.

The following table regarding the District Employment Exchange and showing figures of registrations, vacancies notified, placements, live register at the close of the year and monthly average number of employers using this Exchange during 1972 will convey an idea of the extent of unemployment in the district and the efforts of this unit to relieve it.

DISTRICT EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE : JALPÄIGURI

Year	No. of registrations	Vacancies notified	No. of placements	Live Register at the end of the year	Monthly average No. of employers using the Exchange
1972	9,947	1,368	113	13,009	10.6

The sex-wise break-up of the total applicants was male 11,865; female 1,444.

The following table gives the educational qualifications of the job-seekers at the end of the year 1972.

	No.
(1) Below School Final and illiterates ...	7,489
(2) School Final ...	1,986
(3) Higher Secondary and under-graduates ...	2,608
(4) Graduates ...	926
Total :	13,009

The following table indicates the occupational pattern of the job wanted at the end of the year 1972.

Broad category of jobs	No.
Industrial & Supervisory	269
Skilled & semi-skilled	805
Unskilled	6,209
Clerical	5,002
Educational	124
Domestic	84
Others	516
Total :	13,009

The Exchange reports excess supply of unskilled workers (both male & female) and freshers from schools and colleges.

As on July 1976, the Registrants on the Live Register numbered 16,700.

To relieve congestion in crowded occupations, the Exchange notifies the cases to other Exchanges where vacancies are likely to exist and also provides vocational guidance to candidates by advising them to equip themselves for absorption in new occupations. With the same object in view, the Employment Market

Information Unit of the District Employment Exchange collects various information on the employment pattern at the public and private sector establishments employing 25 persons or more through Statutory Quarterly Employment and Biennial Occupational Returns under the Employment Exchanges Compulsory Notification of Vacancies Act 1959.¹

COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT

Within the framework of the Five-Year Plans, the Community Development programme aiming at ameliorating the socio-economic condition of the rural people was first launched in this district in 1955 with the inauguration of the Jalpāiguri, Maynāguri and Dhupguri development blocks. The programme now covers the whole district with 13 blocks, the particulars of which are given below.²

Name of Sub-division	Name of block	Date of inauguration	Present stage	Area in sq.km.	No. of villages	Total population
Sadar	Jalpāiguri	1.4.1955	Post-Stage II	475.1	24	—
	Maynāguri	1.4.1955	„	561.5	105	1,59,764
	Dhupguri	1.4.1955	„	651.4	86	2,16,330
	Rājganj	1.4.1959	„	636.6	29	1,28,774
	Māl	1.4.1964	Stage II	505.3	118	—
	Matiāli	1.4.1964	„	235.8	42	—
	Nāgrākātā	1.4.1964	„	276.4	41	66,002
Ālipur Duārs	Kumārgrām	2.10.1956	Post-Stage II	504.0	60	97,211
	Fālākātā	1.4.1957	„	317.5	63	1,30,529
	Mādārihāt	1.4.1961	„	380.5	51	1,00,749
	Kālchini	2.10.1963	Stage II	892.0	42	1,34,467
	Ālipur Duār I	1.4.1964	„	699.0	55	2,71,766
	Ālipur Duār II	1.4.1964	„		75	

¹ Source : Directorate of National Employment Service, Calcutta.

²Source : Agriculture & Community Development (Community Development) Department, Government of West Bengal.

As the executive head of the block administration, the Block Development Officer is the drawing and disbursing officer in respect of most of the schemes sanctioned under the Community Development budget. He also co-ordinates and supervises the activities of the Extension Officers who are responsible for the implementation of the schemes of their respective parent departments. Normally, there are 8 Extension Officers in a Block, one each for agriculture, animal husbandry, rural engineering, social education, programme for women and children, co-operation, rural industries and panchayats. There are also a number of village-level workers, the Grām Sevaks and Grām Sevikās, to carry development activities to the remotest corners of the district.

The actual expenditure incurred by the various blocks of the district till 31 March 1973 for implementing different welfare schemes is shown in the table below:¹



¹ Source : Agriculture & Community Development (Community Development) Department, Government of West Bengal.

ACTUAL EXPENDITURE INCURRED TILL 31.3.1973 UNDER DIFFERENT WELFARE SCHEMES

Actual expenditure (in thousand Rs.)

Name of Block	Agricultural extension			Social Education			Industries	Total
	Irrigation	Reclamation	Education	Education	Communi- cation			
Jalpāiguri	58.20	126.50	221.30	62.54	41.00	168.00	126.90	804.44
Maynāguri	67.90	154.00	177.00	65.00	46.50	91.60	111.00	713.00
Dhupguri	68.49	85.00	169.75	64.80	46.90	104.70	109.50	649.14
Rājganj	67.39	149.00	137.00	46.20	36.09	90.00	64.11	589.79
Māl	28.78	65.40	92.00	39.50	24.50	75.00	41.50	366.68
Matiali	33.16	86.50	103.70	38.60	23.10	68.00	43.10	396.16
Nagrākātā	34.95	78.65	109.40	41.20	22.60	83.00	39.50	409.30
Kumārgrām	50.46	99.95	107.80	60.86	23.07	63.89	75.93	481.96
Falakātā	56.92	119.50	123.40	50.00	29.53	109.85	62.73	551.93
Madārihāt	53.10	85.75	91.70	44.80	33.15	92.00	66.94	467.44
Kālcini	48.28	65.74	82.10	43.50	25.00	72.00	48.20	384.82
Ālipur Duār I	38.88	80.00	65.92	31.22	28.18	78.00	59.20	381.40
Ālipur Duār II	31.88	75.00	58.70	27.50	21.50	70.00	50.20	334.78
Grand Total	638.39	1,270.99	1,539.77	615.72	401.12	1,166.04	898.81	6,530.84

CHAPTER X

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

STATE
GOVERNMENT
SET-UP

Jalpāiguri district was formerly a Non-Regulation District and was included in the List of Scheduled Districts to which legislative enactments which did not apply automatically, could be extended by executive order with or without modification. The head of such a district like Jalpāiguri was called the Deputy Commissioner, a designation which still persists even though the distinction between the Regulated and Non-Regulated Districts was completely abolished with the coming into force of the Constitution of India on 26 January 1950. Like his counterparts in other districts of West Bengal, he is in overall charge of the administration of the district both in its revenue and executive spheres.

The Deputy Commissioner is responsible to the Government, through the Commissioner, Jalpāiguri Division and the Board of Revenue, for the administration of revenue in the district. He collects land revenue from the tenants of land formerly held by intermediaries; he also collects rents and cesses from the tenants of government land and the income from the lease of grazing rights, etc. He has also to collect the primary education tax, excise revenue and stamp duties. He is responsible for collecting overdue public demands. The maintenance of land records, including the records of rights, plot indexes, accounts of boundary disputes, statistical information, and settlement records are some of his important duties which he discharges through a hierarchy of revenue officials working under him. The hearing of appeals against the decisions of subordinate revenue officers, in a variety of matters, also falls within his jurisdiction. He grants loans in accordance with the provisions of the Land Improvement Loans Act 1883 and the Agriculturists' Loans Act of 1884. He carries out acquisition of land for Government projects and other public purposes. He heads the Registration Organization of the district and is the *ex-officio* District Registrar.

On the other hand, as the head of the district in its executive sphere he is concerned with the maintenance of law and order within the district and with that end in view he may take such action as he deems necessary during any crisis or emergency. He grants, suspends and cancels licences for fire arms, explosives and petroleum. He performs several important duties in respect of the jails, anti-corruption matters and issue of passports. He

grants nationality certificates as also certificates to applicants claiming to belong to Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes. He has various responsibilities concerning the welfare of Scheduled Tribes. In case of natural calamities like floods and famines he takes necessary steps to deal with them and for providing relief to the distressed. He has to conduct the decennial census operations and all general and by-elections to the Parliament and the State legislature as well as to all local self-governing bodies within the district. Matters relating to food and civil supplies also engage his constant attention. Besides, the implementation of various development schemes in pursuance of the Five Year Plans has added new dimensions to his traditional functions. He co-ordinates the activities of district level officers of various departments connected with development activities. In the Jalpāiguri District, the Deputy Commissioner has the additional responsibility of administering the Western Duārs Marketing Fund.

Besides the Deputy Commissioner, there are two Additional Deputy Commissioners in Jalpāiguri, both belonging to the Indian Administrative Service.

The present sanctioned strength of officers (valid for September 1973) belonging to the WBCS and WBJCS is as follows: Sadar Subdivision (including officers meant for district headquarters) : WBCS 2 and WBJCS 5, and Ālipur Duār Subdivision : WBCS 3 and WBJCS 2.¹

A list of the Development Blocks along with their expenditure on development schemes has been given in Chapter IX.

The Jalpāiguri Income tax circle had 1 Class-I Officer, 4 Class-II Officers, 37 Class-III and 8 Class-IV staff in 1971-72. In 1972-73, the number of Officers and staff was as follows: Class-I, 1; Class-II, 4; Class-III, 31 and Class-IV, 9. The numbers of assesseees in 1971-72 and 1972-73 were respectively 6,352 and 6,491. In 1971-72 and 1972-73, they realized Rs. 45,46,000 and Rs. 47,37,000 respectively as Income tax and other taxes. The numbers of defaulters in those years were 5,024 and 5,686 involving respectively the sums of Rs. 1,02,14,000 and Rs. 1,11,35,000. The numbers of Certificate cases pending for the department were respectively 4,411 and 3,229 for those years.

The Organizational set-up of the Central Excise and Customs has been dealt with in Chapter XI.

¹ The WBCS and the WBJCS have merged into one service in 1974 and there have been a WBCS (Senior Scale) and a WBCS (Junior Scale).

Block Adminis-
tration

CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT
SET-UP

Excise

There is a Divisional Office of the North-east Frontier Railway at Alipur Duār. The offices of the District Mechanical Engineer, District Medical Officer, etc. of this railway are also located there.

Railways

The offices of a Senior Superintendent of Post Offices and a Divisional Engineer, Telegraphs are located at Jalpāiguri.

**Posts &
Telegraphs**

There is the office of an Assistant Central Intelligence Officer at Jalpāiguri.

Intelligence

There is a District Small Savings Organizer at Jalpāiguri. He has a yearly target of small savings collection for the district. The collection is made by the Authorised Agents, from Pay Roll Savings Schemes and through general campaign and direct purchases from the Post Offices. The Authorised Agents are appointed by the State Government officials. There is a District Savings Advisory Committee and a Postal Co-ordination Committee for finding out ways and means for the growth of small savings collection and for removal of difficulties faced by investors, agents, etc. in postal transaction.

Small savings

Consequent on the devastating Tistā flood of 1968 affecting Jalpāiguri it was recognized that there was an urgent necessity of evolving measures for affording protection and minimizing the sufferings of the people and loss of property. Accordingly, Government of India set up in January 1971 the North Bengal Flood Control Board under the chairmanship of the Union Minister of Irrigation and Power and five State Ministers as members and the Chairman of the North Bengal Flood Control Commission as Member-Secretary. Subsequently, the Chief Minister of West Bengal has been appointed Chairman. The North Bengal Flood Control Commission was also set up on 9 November 1971 with headquarters at Jalpāiguri. It comprises a Chairman and two Members who are all technical officers. The objective of the North Bengal Flood Control Commission is investigation, planning and design and preparation of the schemes as well as implementation or execution of the same by a whole-time special organization. The Commission is to work within the broad framework of policy directives issued by the North Bengal Flood Control Board and prepare *inter alia* a comprehensive plan for flood control work in North Bengal including Jalpāiguri district besides Koch Bihār and Dārjiling.

**OTHER
STATUTORY
BODIES**

**North Bengal
Flood Control
Board and
Commission**

The Commission is headed by a Chairman who is assisted by a Member (Execution) and a Member (planning, investigation and design). The Member (Execution) has under him three

Executive Engineers holding charges respectively of Jalpāiguri Irrigation Division, Koch Bihār Irrigation Division, Siliguri Irrigation Division and an Additional Executive Engineer of the Siliguri Irrigation Division. The Member (Planning, etc.) is assisted by the Executive Engineer, Design and the Executive Engineer, North Bengal Investigation Division.

The Irrigation and Waterways Department is the Administrative Department under the direct control of which the North Bengal Flood Control Commission functions. The Chairman of the Commission exercises all the powers of a Chief Engineer and has administrative control over the staff and works in the three North Bengal Districts of Jalpāiguri, Koch Bihār and Dārjiling.

To protect vulnerable and flood-prone areas including agricultural and forest lands, tea estates and towns against flood inundation and river erosion in Jalpāiguri district certain flood control schemes were taken up and the number gradually augmented as the Fourth Plan Years advanced. The amount spent for the purpose in the Jalpāiguri district is as follows :

EXPENDITURE ON MEASURES FOR FLOOD CONTROL IN
JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT

Year	Expenditure in Lakhs of Rs.	Remarks
1969-70	10.51	construction and main-
1970-71	27.51	tenance of 31.49 km. long
1971-72	97.23	embankment to protect
1972-73	90.00	39,700 hectares of agri- cultural land.

West Bengal State
Electricity Board

The district of Jalpāiguri has been divided into six subdivisions to look after the operation and maintenance of the electrical installations of the Board. Headquarters of these O & M Subdivisions are situated at Jalpāiguri, Maynāguri, Māl, Birpara and Ālipur Duār. Each Subdivision is headed by one Assistant Engineer under whom technical and non-technical staff are posted at different places within his jurisdiction. The Assistant Engineers are responsible to the Divisional Engineer (O & M Division) whose headquarters is situated in the Jalpāiguri town. The jurisdiction of the Divisional Engineer is mostly confined to the district of Jalpāiguri, although he also looks after some portion of the district of Koch Bihār. A Superintending Engineer (O & M) is posted at Jalpāiguri to whom the Divisional Engineer, Jalpāiguri (O & M) Division is responsible. The jurisdiction of

the S.E. (O & M) covers the entire district of Koch Bihār. The S.E. (O & M), Jalpāiguri is responsible to the Deputy Chief Engineer (North Bengal) whose headquarters is situated at Siliguri. He, in turn, is responsible to the Additional Chief Engineer (O & M) at the Head Office of the Board in Calcutta.

With a view to expediting rural electrification, the Board has also set up a separate organization for the district of Jalpāiguri. At present a Divisional Engineer (Rural Electrification) is posted at Jalpāiguri town and he is to look after the entire district of Jalpāiguri and also part of Koch Bihār district. The Divisional Engineer is assisted by 2 Assistant Engineers who are entrusted with the construction work of the high, medium and low voltage lines and sub-stations for electrification of new villages. The Offices of the Assistant Engineers are situated at Jalpāiguri and Maynāguri.

The Rural Electrification Division with headquarters at Jalpāiguri started functioning since November 1972 with the idea of paying close attention to rural electrification in this district and the neighbouring Koch Bihār district. Initially, this Division looked after rural electrification works of the whole of the Koch Bihār district and Siliguri Subdivision of the Dārjiling district in addition to the entire Jalpāiguri district. With a view to stepping up rural electrification in Jalpāiguri district, the Siliguri Subdivision and the eastern part of Koch Bihār have been excluded from the jurisdiction of the Division. This Division is attached to the Superintending Engineer, Rural Electrification, Circle-III having his headquarters at Siliguri. The Superintending Engineer (R.E. III) is responsible to the Additional Chief Engineer (Rural Electrification) of the Board in Calcutta.

The North Bengal State Transport Corporation with its headquarters at Koch Bihār serves the five North Bengal Districts, namely, Koch Bihār, Jalpāiguri, Dārjiling, Māldāh and West Dinājpur. In April 1945, the former Koch Bihār Rāj started a motor transport service with a fleet of 3 buses and 3 trucks under its Second World War Reconstruction scheme. After the merger of the Koch Bihār State with West Bengal since 1 January 1950, the Government of West Bengal took over control of this undertaking and extended its operation. The NBSTC was subsequently established with the participation of the Railway Board with effect from 15 April 1960. It has a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a General Manager, a Chief Engineer, a Deputy General Manager and a Chief Accounts Officer. It has 502

North Bengal
State Transport
Corporation

persons on its administrative staff, 2,734 on its traffic staff and 1,201 on its mechanical and/or maintenance staff. It incurred a total establishment cost of Rs. 1,55,60,096 in 1973-74.

Life Insurance
Corporation
of India

A Divisional Office of the Life Insurance Corporation of India is located at Jalpāiguri. It is headed by a Divisional Manager.

Food Corpora-
tion of India

The Office of the District Manager, Food Corporation of India, Jalpāiguri is located at Jalpāiguri.



CHAPTER XI

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

HISTORY OF
LAND REVENUE
ADMINISTRATION

The Jalpāiguri district consists of two widely different tracts, viz., the *parganās* of Baikunṭhapur, Bodā and Pātgrām, formerly included in the Rangpur district, and the Western Duārs, added to the district in 1864, and, in giving an account of the land revenue administration, it is necessary to deal separately with them.

The *parganās* of Baikunṭhapur, Bodā and Pātgrām formed part of the Koch kingdom, but were conquered and annexed by the Mughals who incorporated them in the frontier Faujdāri of Fakirkundi or Rangpur; they were transferred to the East India Company with the cession of the *diwāni* in 1765. Practically, nothing is known about the system of revenue and revenue administration pursued in respect of the territories comprising the modern district of Jalpāiguri till about the sixteenth century. The people were mostly shifting cultivators, hunters and food gatherers. As such, their economy was a subsistence economy. Settled agriculture began in Baikunṭhapur area only after a section of the Koches were Hinduized under the influence of Bengali Hindus and took over Kāmtāpur-Kāmarūpa kingdom under the leadership of Bisu or Biśvasimha. Biśvasimha made his brother Sisu or Śishyasimha, the Rāi or the Rājā of the *Kot* or fort at Baikunṭhapur. By utilizing the state power the Koch king and the Rāikat endowed rent-free grant of land to Bengali and Assamese Brāhmins and Kāyasthas. The latter brought with them the techniques of settled agriculture to Baikunṭhapur and the Duārs.

The Mughal Foujdār of Rangpur first invaded Koch Bihār kingdom in 1685. Conflict broke out in 1704-05 between the Koch Bihār kingdom and Mughal Foujdār of Rangpur. At last, a peace treaty was concluded between the Mughals and the Rājā of Koch Bihār in 1711, by the terms of which the erstwhile Koch Bihār *chāklās* of Kajir Hāt, Kakina and Fatepur became parts of Rangpur, and Bodā, Pātgrām and Purbabhāg *chāklās* were ceded by the king of Koch Bihār on condition that the Mughal Foujdār would firm out the right of collection of revenue of these *chāklās* to Koch Bihār.

Mughal period

Sometime between 1736 and 1739, Saulat Jung, the Faujdār of Rangpur, invaded Baikunṭhapur which was declared a Mughal *parganā* under the Faujdār of Rangpur. The revenue of the *parganā* was assessed at Rs. 32,000 a year, which had to be deposited at the Rangpur collectorate by the zamindār Rāikat of Baikunṭhapur. From the amount of the *jamā*, the *parganā* came to be known as *parganā* Battishāzāri.

From 1757 onwards, taking advantage of Murshidābād's pre-occupation with the question of succession and adjustment of relations with the East India Company, Rāikat Darpadeva of Baikunṭhapur, without formally renouncing the suzerainty of the Bengal *Subāh*, began to pay lesser and lesser revenue each year.

East India
Company takes
over *Diwāni*

Meanwhile, in the year 1765, the East India Company had got the right of collecting revenue and management of the *diwāni* of the Mughal territories in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa by a *firman* of the Mughal Emperor Shāh Ālam. Since Baikunṭhapur never formally renounced the suzerainty of the Mughal Faujdār of Rangpur, the *parganā* automatically came under the *diwāni* of East India Company and it devolved upon the Supravisor and then upon the Collector of Rangpur to collect the revenue of Baikunṭhapur *parganā*. But Baikunṭhapur's relations with Mughals was somewhat ambiguous. In a letter dated 20 April 1770, John Grose, the Supravisor of Rangpur, wrote to Richard Becher, the Company's representative at the Murshidābād Durbār; "they (zemindārs of Bodā and Baikunṭhapur) pay a certain sum annually without giving an account in what manner their collections are made."¹ In another letter dated 21 July 1770, Grose complained to Becher; "Zemindārs of Bodā and Baikunṭhapur deny our authority, alleging that they are answerable to Cooch Behār Rājā for their proceedings ..."² but "these two places have long since been annexed to this district."³ The then Rāikat of Baikunṭhapur was actually trying to dodge the burden of revenue. In 1770, the Supravisor of Rangpur, Charles Purling, reported that Rāikat of Baikunṭhapur had paid only Rs. 10,000 as revenue for the preceding year,⁴ whereas he had

¹ *Bengal District Records, Rungpore*, Vol. I, p. VI.

² *ibid.*, p. 10.

³ *ibid.*, p. VI.

⁴ Letter from Charles Purling, the Supravisor of Rangpur, to Warren Hastings, the Governor General of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, dated 31 July 1772.

paid Rs. 30,651 as revenue for the year 1763, to Mirza Hosain Reza, the Mughal Collector of Rangpur.¹

To punish the rebellious Rāikat Darpadeva, Company's army marched on to Baikunṭhapur and captured it in February 1773. Darpadeva fled to jungles. A year later Darpadeva sent his emissary to Governor General Warren Hastings, offering to surrender. He also agreed to pay the revenue at an enhanced rate. It was decided in 1774 that the Rāikat would pay a revenue of Rs. 25,000 per year.² The revenue was arbitrarily enhanced the next year, i.e. 1775, to Rs. 30,000.³ This was maintained despite Rāikat's protests.

When the Permanent Settlement was introduced in 1793, the revenue for Baikunṭhapur *parganā* was settled at Rs. 25,936 per year and the Rāikat was recognized as the zamindār under the Permanent Settlement for Baikunṭhapur *parganā* in Rangpur district.

Alipur Duārs Subdivision of Jalpāiguri, comprising the Western Duārs of Bhalkā, Buxā, Madar, Rāla and Chamarchi were added to Jaipāiguri district in 1865-66.

It will be convenient to give here the account of Dr. Buchanan Hamilton (1809) regarding the *parganās* of Baikunṭhapur, Bodā and Pātgram which constituted the Jalpāiguri district less the Western Duārs : "Pātgram Estate, which comprises the police division of the same name, is the property of the Cooch Behār Rājā, and contains 62 *mauzas* or collections of villages. More than half the estate is let to large farmers, some of whom hold under leases called *upanchaki*, which are granted for a certain specified farm and not according to a particular area, so that their rent cannot be increased nor their lands measured. The *don*, or local land measures is equal to 15,670 sq. feet, or 1.08 Calcutta bighas. There are 30 *jotedārs* who pay their rents directly into the office of the Rājā's collector; these are called *khārij jotedārs*. The others, who pay their rents to the village officers, are called *dihibandi*. The large farmers let out to under-tenants as much land as suffices to pay their rent, and cultivate the remainder through *prajās*, on the usual sharing

Dr. Buchanan-Hamilton's account, Pātgram

¹ W. K. Firminger : *Historical Introduction to the Bengal Portion of the Fifth Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Affairs of the East India Company*. Calcutta, 1962 (ISPP edn.), p. 10.

² Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, 22 April 1774.

³ J. A. Milligan — *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Jalpāiguri District 1906-16*, Calcutta, 1919, p. 7.

tenure. The average rent paid by the *jotedārs* to the Rājā is, I am told, only Rs. 3 for 10 *dons*, equal to $4\frac{1}{2}$ annas a Calcutta bigha, but I believe the tenants have to pay the whole of the village establishment. The people are very poor, shy and indolent.

Bodā

"Boda is a very fine estate, also belonging to the Cooch Behār Rājā. It contains 402 *mauzas* or *dihis* besides 27 large *kharij* farms, such as I have mentioned in Pātgrām. No *lākhirāj* land is mentioned in the Collector's papers; but it is said a very large part has been granted rent-free by the Rājā, both to religious persons and to his servants. Most of the farms were originally large, but they have in general been reduced to a small size, by subdividing among heirs, a most ruinous practice, which should be entirely prohibited. The whole estate is divided into *tālaks*, and these again into *mahals*, each of which was originally one farm. In every *tāluk* are found two to five *tahutdārs*, who are wealthy farmers appointed by the Rājā according to the wishes of the other tenants, and are usually continued in office for several years. The *tahutdār* finds security for the whole rent, and receives from the tenants from Rs. 50 to Rs. 175 a year, according to the extent under his charge; the tenants pay the whole village establishment of clerks (*patwāris*), and various kinds of messengers (*sardārs*, *pāiks*, *kotwāls*, etc.). The lands were not measured when the settlement of the Rājā's estates was made, the tenants being very averse to such a course, as might naturally be expected, for the rent which they pay is very small. The leases specify neither the term of years for which the holdings are let, nor the measurement of the farm, but only the rent stipulated to be paid for the farm. If any tenant goes away, the others pay the rent until they can procure a new tenant, or else they divide the land among themselves. The Rājā has, therefore, no interest, except to collect the rent with as little expense as possible, and to beg and squeeze all that he can from the tenants. There is no economy in the management. In some *tālaks* no *tahutdār* can be found, and these are managed by *gomastās*, or agents, each with a large establishment. The *tahutdārs*, who are men of property, and who ought to pay their whole rent into the Rājā's Office, make delays, so that six *tahsildārs* or stewards are required to refresh their memories. The twenty-seven original large farms, which are not dependent on the *tahutdārs*, but which, if undivided, would have paid their rents immediately into the Rājā's office, have now subdivided into so many small shares, that a whole host of subordinates is

required to manage them. In fact, the Rājā's interests in this estate seem to have been very much neglected.

"Baikunṭhapur or Battris-Hazāri, although part has been alienated to Bhutan, is still a very fine estate, and comprises the two entire police divisions of Fakirganj* and Sanyāsikātā. It is not included in any *sarkār* or Muhammadan division of the country having only been added to Bengal since the British assumed the government of the country. A person named Sisu, grandson in the female line of the Koch Hajo (the founder of the Cooch Behār Rājās), is the original ancestor of the Baikunṭhapur family. It is generally asserted that Sisu was the son of Jira, the daughter of Hajo, but the family themselves allege that he as well as Visu (another grandson of Hajo and the first of the Cooch Behār Rājās who was converted to Hinduism) was the son not of Jira, but of her sister, Hira, and that his father was the god Śiva, on which account all the members of the family assume the name of Deo, and return no salute that is made to them by any person. Sisu, on the conversion of Visu to Hinduism, took the title of Śib-Kumar, or young Śiva; he was appointed hereditary Rāikat, or the Second person in rank in the Koch kingdom, and received the Baikunṭhapur estate.

Baikunṭhapur

"Formerly the family resided at Baikunṭhapur, where there was a little cultivation scattered among the woods; while all the southern part of the estate was allowed to be thickly overgrown with reeds and bushes, as a defence against the Muhammadans. Dharma Deo, on the decay of the Mughal power, left Baikunṭhapur and settled at Jalpāiguri. He began to clear the lands in the south, which are now well cultivated; but the tracts in the woods and jungles to the north, which were formerly cultivated, are now neglected. There are no large tenants on the estate, and the rents are still very low owing probably to the vicinity of Bhutan and Gurkha (Sikkim, then held by the Nepalīs), 'where there is much waste land and a large proportion of the tenants are constantly removing from one jurisdiction into another. The actual rent realised from the tenants, is I understand, about $4\frac{3}{4}$ annas per *don* of land, good and bad, containing 12,472 sq. feet, or about 0.86 of a Calcutta bigha. The maximum rent for a farm, 20 *don* in extent, is said to be as follows: House and garden land, Rs. 15; first quality land, Rs. 12; second quality land, Rs. 9; third quality land, Rs. 7; fourth quality land, Rs. 4; total Rs. 47.

* Now Jalpāiguri.

Originally the farms were let by guess measurement, or by *kaldari* or 'plough'. That is, a farm was estimated to contain as much as could be cultivated by a certain number of ploughs and paid a fixed sum for each, a custom of which once probably extended all over Kāmṛūp. About the year 1788, land measure was first introduced. The whole estate is divided into fifteen *tāluks*, and the establishment is a very moderate one. In Sanyāsikātā, which is the largest *tāluk*, there is one steward (*tahsildār*), one clerk (*muharir*), three inspectors of villages (*pradhāns*), one valuer of money (*podḍār*), one chief messenger (*sardār*), one assistant messenger (*mirdhā*), four ordinary messengers (*pāiks*), one officer (*jamāḍār*), and four matchlockmen (*barkandāz*) and four sweepers. There is no subordinate village establishment. The whole are paid by money wages."¹

FORMATION OF DISTRICT

On the formation of the district in 1869, we find the district divided into two distinct tracts for revenue purposes. The Permanently Settled portion, comprising Baikunṭhapur *parganā* and the *chāklās* of Bodā, Pātgrām and Purbabhāg forming Jalpāiguri Sadar Subdivision and Ālipur Duārs Subdivision comprising 180 temporarily settled estates and five government estates.

Survey & Settlement

According to the Survey and Settlement Operations of 1906-16, there were 122 revenue-paying estates and 212 revenue-free estates in the Permanently Settled portion of Jalpāiguri district. Most of these estates belonged to two large zamindaries, namely, the zamindary of the Rāikat of Baikunṭhapur and the *Chāklājāt* zamindary of the Rājā of Koch Bihār in Bodā, Pātgrām and Purbabhāg *chāklās*.

The first settlement of land in Western Duārs took effect since April 1871 and was made after a detailed measurement and classification of all cultivated land. The Government took all lands in *khās* possession and settled them with *jotedārs*. The *jotedārs* were permitted to retain in their holdings as much waste land as they chose, and they in fact appropriated 1,42,127 acres of waste land against 80,395 acres of cultivated land. Apart from the interest of *jotedārs*, no other interest on land was recognized. At this settlement it was decided that the *jotedār* had a vested and transferable interest in the holding. The total revenue demand stood at Rs. 88,618 at the end of the settlement.

¹ Quoted by J. F. Gruning, *Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers, Jalpāiguri*, Allahabad, 1911, pp. 80-82.

The second settlement of lands in Western Duārs took effect since April 1880. In this settlement, the rights of *chukānidārs*, that is, tenants under the *jotedārs* were given some recognition. Government desired that the aggregate of rent paid by *chukānidārs* to a *jotedār* should not exceed the revenue payable by the *jotedār* by more than 50% and that the rent payable by the *chukānidārs* should be fixed for the period of settlement. The general result of the settlement was to raise the revenue from Rs. 88,618 to Rs. 1,51,862. Rates were subsequently found to be pressing on the inferior *jotes* and small *jotedārs* found it hard to pay the revenue and so remissions amounting to Rs. 17,806 had to be granted. Yet, the Government had to lose a revenue of Rs. 5,465 as some of the *jotedārs* found it more economical to desert their *jotes* than to continue under heavy financial pressure.

The third settlement and survey operations were carried out between 1889 and 1895. In this settlement, the lands in Ālipur Duārs Subdivision were seen as parcelled into 11,112 *jotes* or blocks held by the Government in *khās*. Of these, 9,971, comprising an area of 3,84,895.91 acres, were assessed to revenue. One *jote* was settled with the descendants of Upendranath Duārdār as revenue-free *jote*, comprising an area of 36.6 acres. 262 *jotes*, comprising an area of 3,38,047.26 acres, were held by the Government in *khās* for future settlement. 817 *jotes* comprising an area of 49,109.08 acres were held by Government in *khās* as permanent fallow. 61 *jotes*, encompassing a total area of 2,119.25 acres, accommodated 17 private and 44 Government *hāṭs* and markets.

Of the 9,971 revenue paying *jotes*, 6,703 were old and 2,743 were newly settled. Jalpeśvar Śiva held 44 revenue paying *jotes*; however, at a later settlement, Jalpeś estates were made revenue-free.

According to the settlement of 1889-95 the revenue demand (on 9,971 revenue paying *jotes*) of Ālipur Duārs Subdivision stood at Rs. 3,74,901. This was a substantial increase and was due partly to the increase in the number of revenue paying *jotes* brought under cultivation in recent years, and partly to the enhancement of rates.

The *jotes* proper had an average area of 38.6 acres, according to the survey settlement operations of 1889-95. The largest *jote* had an area of 2,609 acres, while the smallest had an area of only 0.06 acres. Descendants of Haragovinda Kāthām and Col. Hedayet Ali were the biggest *jotedārs* of Ālipur Duārs Subdivision.

Shortly after the acquisition of the Western Duārs, Col. (then Major) Hedayet Ali obtained in 1866 a rent-free lease for five years, permitting him to bring under cultivation all the unoccupied lands in twenty *tāluks*, with a promise that all lands so brought under cultivation would be settled with him at the end of that period. The lease was subsequently cancelled, but again revived in 1868. Under the terms of the renewal of the lease, Hedayet Ali was given a lease of unoccupied lands in ten *tāluks*, exclusive of the lands in possession of Government *rāiyats*. The arrangements made with Hedayet Ali were modified in 1871 and 1876. In the settlement of 1889-95, a total of 22,563 acres, including waste lands, spread out in 389 *jotes*, were settled with the descendants of Col. Hedayet Ali at half the rate of normal revenue payable by other *jotedārs*. The aggregate of the revenue payable by the estate of the descendants of Hedayet Ali, at half the rate of normal revenue, stood at Rs. 7,897 in 1910-11.

The third settlement was made with the *jotedārs* for varying periods ranging between four and ten years. With those holding leases for less than ten years, arrangements were subsequently made in which rates were readjusted.

The fourth settlement of Ālipur Duārs Subdivision began in the cold weather of 1907 and was completed in 1916. This settlement recorded a big change vis-a-vis the settlement of 1889-95. During the last mentioned settlement, the greater part of land to the east of the Torsā river was unsettled waste land or forest. In the settlement under review 2,93,000 acres of such land had given place to 100 sq. miles of tea gardens. Similarly, a great development had taken place in the tract lying between the Jaldhākā on the west and the Torsā in the east. Although the settlement of 1889-95 had practically shown the whole of this area as "Tea Grant", a very large number of them were at that time only speculatively taken up and were subsequently surrendered. These were profitably taken up for tea cultivation only in the first decade of the twentieth century. There was also an extension of cultivation into the former waste lands of settled *jotes*.

Land Relations

It is now necessary to describe the system of land relations that prevailed in Jalpāiguri district before the enactment of the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act of 1953 and the West Bengal Land Reforms Act of 1955. It may be noted that the system of land relations in Jalpāiguri district differed considerably from what it was elsewhere in Bengal.

In the Permanently Settled portion of the district, that is, in Jalpāiguri Sadar Subdivision, the zamindary system obtained. There were two large and some small zamindary estates. Revenues payable by them were fixed, except for cesses and other levies imposed on them by executive orders made under the provisions of relevant acts. Zamindārs enjoyed heritable rights and rights of transfer by gifts and sale. They also enjoyed the right of parcelling out land for rent.

The zamindārs used to parcel out their estates among *jotedārs*. The *jotedārs* in the Permanently Settled portion of the district were a class of intermediaries between the zamindars and the cultivators; they paid rent to the zamindars and collected rent from their subordinate tenants.

The *jotedārs* of Government's *Khās Mahal*, on the other hand, were those people with whom the Government settled *jotes* or blocks of land for fixed periods. The rates by which they had to go in paying land revenue were variable, but usually fixed for the period of settlement. Like the zamindars of the Permanently Settled areas, they too were subject to some kinds of cesses of varying rates.

There were three types of *jotedāri* tenures. The *jotedārs* of *mal jote* were those with whom the first settlement was made and were in existence during the second settlement as such. They were the original *jotedārs*. They had heritable rights over their *mal jotes* and could transfer their *jotes* by gift or by sale at will. Renewal of leases, however, depended on their acceptance of the term dictated by Government. Ordinary or non-*mal jotedars'* rights differed from those of *mal jotedars'* in respect of transfer of land. Ordinary *jotedārs* did not enjoy absolute right of transfer, although they too like the *mal jotedārs* enjoyed heritable interest in land provided they accepted the terms of lease. There was a third kind of lease applicable to tea gardens, the areas of which were extending with every settlement. These were called the Tea Grants.

Jotedārs of Permanently Settled areas of Jalpāiguri district were first degree *pattanidārs* who elsewhere in Bengal were known as *tālukdārs*. Under the provisions of the Bengal Tenancy Act they became *rāiyats* who could not be evicted at will. The rents paid by them became fixed and they came to enjoy rights of inheritance and transfer of land. Their rights to give land in *pattani* were not disturbed by the B.T. Act.

In other respects the land tenure system of Ālipur Duārs Sub-division differed very little from that of the Permanently Settled areas of Jalpāiguri.

The *jotedārs* in both the Permanently Settled estates and in the Government *Khās Mahals* in Ālipur Duārs Subdivision used to give most of their land *pattani* to *chukānidārs* or *mulandārs*. At first he (*chukānidār*) was not allowed, under the provisions of the *jotedār's* lease to sub-let the whole or any portion of his tenure in further *pattani*, although he was allowed to employ *ādhiārs* or share-croppers. But in course of time, especially after the enactment of the Bengal Tenancy Act by the provisions of which he became a *rāiyat* with heritable and transferable interest in the holding, began to give portions of his land in *pattani*. B.T. Act recognized *chukānidārs* or *mulandārs* as under-tenants who paid money rents to *jotedārs*.

The *chukānidārs* or *mulandārs* used to parcel out portions of their land in *pattani* to *dar-chukānidārs* and *dar-chukānidārs* again, in their turn, gave portions of their holding in further *pattani* to *dar-a-dar-chukānidārs*.

At the base of the ladder were the *ādhiārs* or *projās*. They cultivated land immediately under a *jotedār*, *chukānidār* or derivative *chukānidār*, but whatever the designation or status of the *ādhiār's* immediate superior might be, he was known as the *ādhiār's* "*giri*". Half the produce of the land went to the *giri* and half to the *ādhiār*. The *giri* usually made an advance of seed or cash to the *ādhiār* which was adjusted when the produce was divided. The ploughs and cattle sometimes belonged to the *giri* and sometimes to the *ādhiār*. The legal status of the various classes of *ādhiār* was somewhat uncertain till the Board of Revenue passed orders that *ādhiārs*, who are independent of their *giris* in the matter of ploughs and cattle, were to be treated as tenants, irrespective of the length of time during which they had occupied the lands they cultivated.

In 1951 the various interests in land in the district were distributed as follows¹ :

Class	Area in acres	Average Rent Rs. A. P.		
Tenure-holders				
Rent-paying, fixed	63,867	0	11	0
—Ditto—enhanceable	3,92,159	1	2	7

¹ A. Mitra (ed.) — *Census 1951, West Bengal District Census Handbooks : Jalpaiguri*, Calcutta 1953. p. xcvi.

Class	Area in acres	Rs. A. P. Average Rent
Rent-free	15,623	—
Rāiyats at fixed rents	12,795	1 2 11
Settled rāiyats on cash rents	3,66,565	2 4 11
Settled rāiyats on produce rents	14,745	—
Occupancy-rāiyats on cash rents	211	2 6 10
Occupancy-rāiyats on produce rents	53	—
Non-occupancy-rāiyats on cash rents	14,135	2 14 1
Non-occupancy-rāiyats on produce rents	2,833	—
Rent-free	3,402	—
Under-rāiyats, cash paying	58,617	3 9 0
Under-rāiyats, produce paying	9,937	—

Relations between the landlords and *rāiyats* or the persons recognized as tenants by the Bengal Tenancy Act were cordial and more or less free from tension and strife.

Strained relations between *jotedārs* and *chukānidārs* on the one hand, and *ādhiārs* on the other, developed due to non-legal and semi-customary exactions the former made upon the latter. The situation was particularly bad in the estate of the descendants of Col. Hedayet Ali. There were many sharers and co-sharers of that estate. The share of each had dwindled down to very low levels and so to replenish their funds all the sharers were in the habit of making exorbitant exactions from the *ādhiārs*. The effect of these exactions was the Tebhāgā Movement of 1946-50, which led to the enactment of West Bengal Bargadars Act of 1950, for the amelioration of the condition of the crop-sharing tillers. The Tebhāgā Movement spread to Jalpāiguri from the neighbouring districts of Rangpur and Dinājpur. In this movement the *ādhiārs* demanded that 2/3 of the share of produce should remain with the actual tiller with 1/3 going as rent to the land-holder and that the land-holder should

be debarred from making illegal exactions from him. The 1946-50 movement led to the legal recognition of occupancy right of crop-sharers and abolition of illegal exactions.

Special settlement;
Garo & Mech
Colony

During the settlement and survey operations of 1889-95, an attempt had been made to group the settled agriculturists among the Meches and Garos together, and give them a separate colony, for they were being exploited by their more intelligent neighbours and were in danger of losing their land. A Mech and Garo Colony was established in Ālipur *tehsil*, east of the Torsā river and south of the road leading to Rājābhātkhāw ā. 766 *jotes* covering an area of 90,593.66 acres or 30 sq. miles were set apart for the Colony. But not all members of the two communities were settled, because a majority were not settled agriculturists. No special measures were, however, taken to ensure that the tract of the country should be kept reserved only for Meches and Garos. Ordinary leases were issued and there was nothing to prevent the *jotedārs* from transferring their holdings. A special enquiry was made in 1907-08 and it was then found that there was not a single Garo in the Colony and more than half of the *jotedārs* were outsiders, mainly Orāons. These Orāons had initially been drafted from Bihar as labourers in tea gardens. After they had made some cash savings, many of them purchased *jotedāri* rights and settled down. In 766 *jotes*, there were only 218 Mech *jotedārs*; 177 Mech *chukānidārs* and 219 Mech *ādhiārs*.

Totos of
Totopārā

Toto, a small Tibeto-Burman speaking autochthonous tribe lives in Totopārā, bounded on the north by Bhutan, on the east by the Torsā river and on the east and the south by the Titi forest. The whole *jote* containing 2,033 acres was settled in Maṇḍali grant given in the name of the traditional headman or Maṇḍali of the Totos for Rs. 120 per annum by the settlement of 1889-93. But the settlement of 1906-16 changed it to a tax of Rs. 2 per adult male per annum. The lands in Totopārā are inalienable to non-Totos.

Santal Colony

The Santals were drawn into the district as tea garden labourers from Bihar, Orissa and western Bengal by labour contractors and by 1901 they numbered 10,857 in the district. The missionaries of the Church Missionary Society were very active among the Santals and Oraons who had come as tea labourers. To make their position stronger among the immigrant tribals, the Christian missionaries had approached Sanders, the Settlement Officer who conducted the survey and settlement

operations of 1889-93. Mr. Sanders selected a piece of waste land in Mahākālguri *tāluk* in Ālipur Duārs Subdivision between the Gadādhār and the Rāidāk rivers. Eventually, the Church Missionary Society set up a Colony mainly for the Christian Santals on the 30 sq. miles of land the Government had settled with it. In 1911, there were 1,500 Christian and 500 non-Christian Santals in the Colony. Every acre of available land was under cultivation. In 1953, the then Superintendent of Census Operations, A. Mitra found more Meches than Santals in the Colony, although the Colony was known as Santal Colony. Land in the Colony is inalienable to outsiders and/or non-tribals and all sub-transfers are subject to the approval of the Church Missionary Society.

The West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act of 1953 was passed, annulling all intermediary interests. Another piece of legislation, the West Bengal Land Reforms Act 1955 was also passed to follow up the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act of 1953 and to incorporate the West Bengal Bargadari Act of 1950 within its purview.

LAND REFORMS &
PRESENT SYSTEM
OF LAND AND
LAND REVENUE
MANAGEMENT

The West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act of 1953 brought all cultivators* into direct relationship with the State. According to the Act, the ex-intermediaries can retain up to 25 acres of agricultural and 15 acres of non-agricultural land in their possession for cultivation. These ceilings also apply to all tenants. The lands held in excess of these ceilings were vested in the State for distribution among landless labourers and cultivators having uneconomic holdings. The procedure for distribution of such lands has been laid down in the West Bengal Land Reforms Act 1955. The West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Act of 1971 brought down the previous ceilings of 25 acres per individual in respect of agricultural land to a lesser area per family. The maximum is 7 standard hectares (about 20 bighas) and the minimum is 2.50 standard hectares, according to the number and nature of members of the family. There was a High Court case over this new ceiling. The case is *sub-judice*.

* According to the W. B. Estates Acquisition Act and the W. B. Land Reforms Act, any person who cultivates his land (a) himself, and/or (b) with the help of the members of his family, and/or (c) with the help of hired labourers under his own supervision and/or (d) by parceling out the whole or part of his holding among the *bargādārs/ādhīārs* or crop sharers, is to be regarded as a cultivator. The cultivator need not necessarily be a tiller himself.

After the enactment of the West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act and the West Bengal Land Reforms Act, a revisional survey and settlement operation was undertaken from the attestation stage to prepare a new record of rights. In preparing the record of rights of the revisional settlement operations, the Settlement Department, has been, from the very beginning of the operations, marking out the lands vested in the State. According to the Director of Land Records and Surveys, West Bengal, "it is not possible to say the exact total quantities of lands that vested (surplus of land held over the ceiling by the ex-intermediaries and tenants of all kind) before August 1967.¹ "From August 1967 a new intensive drive was launched for recovery of lands held in *benāmi* or through clandestine transfer and all other lands, vesting of which had been evaded so long."²

The total amount of land, held by various ex-intermediaries and tenants over and above the originally stipulated ceilings, which was vested in the State in Ālipur Duārs Subdivision of Jalpāiguri, up till 31 March 1973, amounted to 39,288.45 acres. Regarding Jalpāiguri Sadar Subdivision, there is some discrepancy between the figures given by the Settlement Wing of the Land Revenue Department and the Management Wing of the same Department. According to the former 1,68,215.05 acres of land were vested till 31 March 1973. The latter Wing maintains that up to that date 1,55,341.96 acres were vested.³ Of these, 8,324.50 acres (7,699.91 acres in Sadar Subdivision and 624.59 acres in Ālipur Duārs Subdivision) were found unsuitable for cultivation.⁴ Only a small fraction of the 1,71,018 holdings, spread over 596 *mauzas* of the district, has so far been covered by the operation for the preparation of a new record of rights under the W.B.E.A. Act and the W.B.L.R. Act.⁵

Out of the cultivable land available for redistribution a total of only 51,004.53 acres could actually be redistributed up to 30 June 1973. The remaining lands were under litigation. Out of this 51,004.53 acres of land redistributed, 16,046.70 acres were on

¹ *A Statement of Lands Vested Under West Bengal Estates Acquisition Act* (up to June 1969), Director of Land Records & Surveys, West Bengal, Calcutta, 1970, p. (i).

² *ibid.*, loc. cit.

³ Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Jalpāiguri, *Final Year of the Fourth Plan, Jalpaiguri*, 1973, p. 251.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 252.

⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 253-54.

rāiyati settlement and 34,957.83 acres were settled on the basis of one-year licence which is renewable.¹

For the purpose of collection of land revenue and cesses, the district is divided into 13 Circles. Seven of these Circles, namely, Jalpāiguri Sadar, Rājganj, Maynāguri, Dhupguri, Māl, Matīālī and Nāgrākātā are in Jalpāiguri Sadar Subdivision, and six of the Circles, namely, Ālipur Duār I, Ālipur Duār II, Fālākātā, Kālchīni, Mādārihāt and Kumārgrām are in Ālipur Duārs Subdivision. Each Land Reforms Circle is headed by a Junior Land Reforms Officer. Above them there are two Senior Land Reforms Officers, one for each Subdivision. The following table gives the demand and collection of land revenue and cesses in the district for 1971-74.

Organization
for land revenue

Land Revenue

STATEMENT OF DEMAND & COLLECTION OF LAND REVENUE & CESSSES IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1971-74

Year	Total demand including arrear Rs.	Total collection during the year Rs.	Collection as percentage of demand
1377 B.S. (1971-72)	32,23,703.84	12,54,583.58	38.91
1378 B.S. (1972-73)	36,01,704.38	18,07,277.15	50.00
1379 B.S. (1973-74)	38,87,295.85	10,13,341.51	26.07

The total number of holdings in the district, as on 31 May 1973, was 1,59,018 (1,09,347 in Jalpāiguri Sadar Subdivision and 49,671 in Ālipur Duārs Subdivision). Of these 20,349 (17,211 in Sadar and 3,138 in Ālipur Duārs Subdivisions) were exempt from paying land revenue. Rest of the holdings numbering 44,803 (30,026 in Sadar and 14,777 in Ālipur Duārs) were revenue paying.

There is an Officer-in-Charge of Tea Garden Touzi who is responsible for the collection of revenue and cesses from the 189 tea gardens in the district. The figures below give collection from tea grants for 1972-73.

Tea grant

No. of gardens	Total collection of land revenue and cesses in 1972-73 Rs.
189	22,19,431.76

After the recent settlement and survey operations it was found that the tea gardens had a surplus of 34,292.01 acres not under plantation. Government took over these lands in *khās* possession.

¹ *ibid.*, p. 254.

Income from
forests

Forests of Jalpāiguri district come under four Forest Divisions each under a Divisional Forest Officer. The Statement¹ below gives a detailed account regarding revenue from the forests of the district.

Name of the division	Forest area of the district coming under the division Sq. Km.	Average* annual income Rs.	Average annual expenditure Rs.
Jalpāiguri Forest	380	45,00,000	10,00,000
Baikunthapur Forest	275.29	20,00,000	40,000
Koch Bihar Forest	N.A. **	N.A.	5,00,000
Buxā Forest	700	50,00,000	3,00,000

Income from the forests, however, cannot be treated as revenue in the same sense as the proceeds of taxes, duties and fees.

AGRICULTURAL
INCOME TAX

Agricultural Income Tax is levied, administered and collected by the State Government. The following table² contains the collections in selected years.

Year	No. of assesseees	Collection made Rs.
1960-61	2,633	18,15,777.21
1965-66	2,768	13,19,555.28
1970-71	2,357	5,65,129.65
1973-74	2,474	11,70,392.52

STATE EXCISE

The Superintendent of Excise, Jalpāiguri helps the Deputy Commissioner in running the district administration insofar as the State Excise is concerned. State Excise is levied on country spirit, *gānjā*, and *bhāṅg*, the consumptions of which were as follows:

Year	Country Spirit	<i>Ganjā</i> (in kg.)	<i>Bhāṅg</i> (in kg.)
1970-71	22,56,519.0 LPL*	502	11
1971-72	18,03,967.0 ..	372	11
1972-73	23,82,452.0 ..	572	15
1973-74	3,78,868.0 ..	58	2

(April & May only)

¹ Source : Deputy Commissioner, Jalpāiguri, *The Final Year of the Fourth Plan, Jalpāiguri, 1973*. pp. 87-102.

(Note : *Average means, the average of the first four years of the Fourth Five Year Plan 1969-74.

**N.A. means not available.)

² Source : Commissioner, Agricultural Income Tax, West Bengal,

* London Proof Litre.

The following statement gives the collection of State Excise revenue for 1970-74.¹

Year	Collection Rs.
1970-71	1,55,79,116.00
1971-72	1,33,66,117.00
1972-73	1,74,76,656.00
1973-74	24,64,305.00
(April & May only)	

The Jalpāiguri Income Tax Circle collected the following amounts :

	Rs.
1971-72	45.46 lakhs
1972-73	47.37 ..

The civil district of Jalpāiguri comes under the jurisdiction of three different Central Excise Divisions ; the main source of duties are tea and tobacco.

CENTRAL EXCISE

Jalpāiguri Central Excise Division is handed by an Assistant Collector. In 1973-74, the total collection from Central Excise was Rs. 1,23,45,000 in Jalpāiguri Central Excise Division. Yearly average cost of collection was roughly Rs. 6 lakhs.²

The most important sources of revenue for the State Government are the Commercial Taxes or the taxes on sale or purchase of certain commodities. The relevant taxation acts are Bengal Finance (Sales Tax) Act of 1941, Bengai Motor Spirit Sales Tax Act of 1941, West Bengal Sales Tax Act of 1954, Central Sales Tax Act of 1956 and West Bengal Paddy Purchase Sales Tax Act of 1970.

COMMERCIAL
TAXES

The civil district of Jalpāiguri comes under the jurisdiction of three different charges for the administration of Commercial Taxes. The whole of Ālipur Duārs Subdivision is under the Koch Bihār Charge. Rājganj police station area in Sadar Subdivision is included in the Siliguri Charge which includes the

¹ Source : Deputy Commissioner, Jalpāiguri, Final Year of the Fourth Five Year Plan, Jalpāiguri, 1973, pp. 300-01.

² Source : Assistant Collector, Central Excise, Jalpāiguri Integrated Division,

greater portion of Dārjiling district. Jalpāiguri Sadar Subdivision, minus Rājganj thana, comes under the charge of the Commercial Tax Officer, Jalpāiguri.

The following table gives the revenue proceeds of the taxes levied under different Acts and collected from the Jalpāiguri Charge.

Year	Acts	No. of assesseees	Collection Rs.
1955-56	B.F.(S.T.) Act 1941	836	12,13,734.00
	B.M.S.S.T. Act 1941	18	24,852.00
	W.B.S.T. Act 1954	29	6,48,142.00
1960-61	B.F. (S.T.) Act 1941	966	16,05,308.00
	B.B.S.T. Act 1954	29	34,762.00
	B.M.S.S.T. Act 1941	51	10,13,697.00
	C.S.T. Act 1956	375	1,96,037.00
1965-66*	B.F. (S.T.) Act 1941	1062	32,26,065.00
	W.B.S.T. Act 1954	36	1,44,951.00
	B.M.S.S.T. Act 1941	57	14,98,847.00
	C.S.T. Act 1956	546	4,79,056.00
1970-71	B.F. (S.T.) Act 1941	615	15,10,144.00
	W.B.S.T. Act 1954	15	14,473.00
	B.M.S.S.T. Act 1941	37	11,49,922.00
	C.S.T. Act 1956	288	7,48,285.00
	W.B.P.P.S.T. Act 1970	11	82,586.00
1973-74	B.F. (S.T.) Act 1941	740	26,30,368.00
	W.B.S.T. Act 1954	14	12,197.00
	B.M.S.S.T. Act 1941	38	13,26,891.00
	C.S.T. Act 1956	284	6,69,752.00
	W.B.P.P.S.T. Act 1970	11	893.00

The expenditure for collection of Commercial Taxes in this Charge in 1970-71 was Rs. 81,000 and in 1973-74 Rs. 1,12,000.

MOTOR VEHICLES
TAX, REGISTRA-
TION, ETC.

Motor vehicles are registered and driving licences are granted by the Deputy Commissioner and Collector of the district under

(* including Siliguri Subdivision then under Jalpāiguri charge).

the Motor Vehicles Act. He also collects the registration and licence fees, and road tax.

As on 31 March 1973, there were 86 stage carriages, 534 contract carriages (260 taxis and 274 buses), 1,908 private carriers, 1,627 public carriers and 3,582 private cars and jeeps in the district. The collection from them in recent years was as follows:¹

	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Driving licence fee	34,633.00	34,830.00	44,675.20
Registration fee	2,52,445.00	3,66,733.00	2,59,708.90
Road tax	25,26,734.83	26,05,278.82	29,95,113.69

Another source of revenue for the State Government is the fee on registration of documents. The Deputy Commissioner and Collector of the district is the *ex-officio* District Registrar. He is assisted by a District Sub-Registrar, three Joint Sub-Registrars and two Sub-Registrars. The following table gives the volume of work, income and expenditure in the Registration offices of the district.

REGISTRATION

STATEMENT ON REGISTRATION IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT, 1971-72

Name of the Registration office & year	Receipts Rs.	Expenditure Rs.	No. of documents including (wills) registered	Wills only registered
Sadar Registration Office				
1971	65,957.50	88,710.53	6,671	10
1972	61,282.63	89,931.43	6,188	15
Sadar Joint S.R. Office				
1971	42,935.00	26,978.00	5,790	2
1972	41,909.50	27,831.00	5,671	2
Maynaguri S.R. Office				
1971	68,416.18	33,155.98	8,191	6
1972	54,943.00	34,923.98	7,000	4
Alipur Duar S.R. Office				
1971	83,342.00	39,491.41	8,504	4
1972	71,427.00	37,090.99	7,806	1
Falakata S.R. Office				
1971	41,451.00	29,760.73	4,456	2
1972	38,361.00	32,573.55	4,388	1
Dhupguri S.R. Office				
1971	54,263.00	35,447.05	6,587	—
1972	56,537.50	48,588.95	7,108	3

¹ Deputy Commissioner, Jalpaiguri: *Final Year of the Fourth Five Year Plan, Jalpaiguri, 1973.* p. 186.

CHAPTER XII

LAW, ORDER AND JUSTICE

INCIDENCE OF CRIME

At the beginning of this century dacoity was quite common in the district and was committed by gangs who carried on their depredations mostly from across the border. The *modus operandi* of such dacoities and the way they were tackled have been described in the last gazetteer as follows:¹ The criminal work of the district is not heavy, but owing to its position on the frontier, dacoities are not uncommon; these are mostly the work of Nepalese and Bhutias, who live across the border, but others are committed by Meches whose homes are within the district and who trust to be able to escape into Bhutan if suspicion falls on them. Successful attempts have been made in recent years to break up the gangs of dacoits and bring their members to justice. The most dangerous gang used to work in Nepal and in the Dārjiling and Jalpāiguri districts; its leader, Balibant Mangar, was a citizen of Nepal, who had received a long sentence, for dacoity with murder in his own country, but had contrived to escape. After many attempts the Jalpāiguri police succeeded in arresting him and he was convicted for bad livelihood; he was subsequently handed over to the Nepal authorities who applied for his extradition. This arrest broke up the gang for the time being; but Balibant's nephew, Jaman Singh Mangar, soon collected another gang and began to commit dacoities along the border of the district; he was hunted out of Jalpāiguri by the police and entered Nepal where he and most of his followers were arrested; the few who escaped at the time have nearly all been run down since by the combined efforts of the Nepal authorities and the Dārjiling and Jalpāiguri police. Urjan Ghurti, who was the last of the dacoits to remain at large, was arrested in the Ālipur Duārs subdivision in August 1908. Another gang which gave considerable trouble was composed of Bhutias who committed a number of dacoities along the frontier; its members have been recently arrested and convicted in Bhutan. Thirty-three crimes, mostly dacoities and burglaries, were traced to a gang which consisted of Meches and Garos with one local Muhammedan; convictions were obtained in 20 cases and 12

¹ J. F. Gruning — *East Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers : Jalpaiguri*, Allahabad, 1911. p. 132.

members of the gang were afterwards prosecuted in a gang case under section 401 of the Indian Penal Code and were convicted. Another gang of Meches committed a dacoity in the Tondur village; the offenders, one of whom had absconded and gone to Bhutan, were arrested and sentenced to terms in imprisonment varying from five to eight years.¹

The table below shows that most of the crimes committed in the district recorded a sharp rise during the period 1961-71.²

Year	Dacoity	Burglary	Cattle theft	Ordinary theft	Murder	Sex crimes
1961	33	540	42	651	36	16
1962	37	544	57	769	37	23
1963	37	685	77	804	48	19
1964	17	422	46	761	42	14
1965	25	408	44	720	26	23
1966	22	390	92	658	36	17
1967	30	395	82	752	41	53
1968	34	435	53	873	43	42
1969	95	626	64	997	38	74
1970	128	638	—	1,421	—	—
1971	142	791	—	1,659	—	—

The increased participation of the state in the matter of production, transportation and distribution of foodstuffs and other essential commodities led to the promulgation of a new set of laws during the last two decades or so which, of course, do not fall within the main crime statute, the Indian Penal Code, but their infringement is no less significant to the society. The figures of this new type of offences in the district during 1967, 1968 and 1969 were 519, 608 and 748 respectively as against 17,843, 14,572 and 7,408 in the State during the same period.

Enforcement crimes

The following table gives the relevant figures of cognizable cases reported, prosecuted and convicted during the period 1967-69.

Prosecutions and convictions

¹ loc. cit.

² Source: D.I.G., C.I.D., West Bengal and S.P., Jalpāiguri.

Year	No. of cases reported	No. of cases prosecuted	No. of cases convicted
1967	2,235	1,679	335
1968	2,507	1,947	281
1969	3,271	2,397	153

Excise offence

The table in Appendix A indicates excise offences committed in different police stations during the years 1968-69 and 1972-73.

ORGANISATION
OF THE POLICE
FORCEPresent Police
personnel

The Jalpāiguri district police force is headed by the Superintendent of Police. He is assisted by one Additional Superintendent and four Deputy Superintendents. There are 13 Inspectors, 109 Sub-Inspectors, 85 Assistant Sub-Inspectors, 1 Jamādār, 79 Head Constables, 32 Nāiks and 1,023 Constables. Of the Inspectors, two are in independent charge of the police stations at Sadar and Ālipur Duār, one is in charge of the Sadar circle comprising the police stations of Rāmganj, Māl and Matīālī, one is in charge of the Maynāguri circle covering the police stations of Maynāguri, Dhupguri and Nāgrākātā and one is in charge of the Ālipur Duār circle comprising the police stations of Kālchīnī, Mādārihāt, Falakata and Kumārgrām.

The other police personnel of the district are distributed as follows :

	Ins-	Head					
UNARMED BRANCH	pectors	S.I.	A.S.I.	Jamā- dār	cons- tables	Nāiks	Cons- tables
Police Stations	—	49	44	1	13	—	332
Circles	—	—	5	—	—	—	5
Court Police	1	6	7	—	1	—	21
D.I.B.	2	17	25	—	—	—	89
D.E.B.	1	12	1	—	—	—	16
District							
Miscellaneous	2	13	3	—	10	—	48
Casualty Reserve	—	5	—	—	—	—	60
ARMED BRANCH							
District Armed							
Police	2	4	—	—	5	23	331
Sadar Subdivision (including treasury police)	—	—	—	—	2	1	9
Ālipur Duārs Sub- division (including treasury police)	—	3	—	—	18	8	46
Casualty Reserve	—	—	—	—	—	—	66

Besides the regular police force, there are semi-official organizations with analogous objectives like the Home Guards, National Volunteer Force, etc., the personnel of which are recruited from the local people who volunteer their services on a part time basis. The present strength of Home Guards is 2,172 (urban 165 and rural 2,007).

Home Guards

An institution not within the immediate ambit of the regular police force is seen working in the rural areas where the local self-governing bodies like the Union Boards of the past and the Village Panchayats of the present maintain a wing of the rural police through such personnel as the Dafadars and Chowkidars. There were 98 Dafadars and 643 Chowkidars in the district during 1968-69.

Rural Police

Chowkidars,
Dafadars and
Village Resistance Groups

Village Resistance Groups act as self-help organisations for guarding the properties of the rural communities against dacoities and burglaries mainly. They are fostered and assisted by the police administration. The number of such Resistance Groups in the district was 920 comprising 27,589 members in 1973.

The district has a district jail at Jalpāiguri established in 1883 and a sub-jail at Ālipur Duār. In the district jail, there is a whole-time Superintendent in charge, 1 Jailor, 1 Deputy Jailor, 3 Clerks, 1 Medical Officer and 1 Compounder. Besides, there are the Watch and Ward staff consisting of 3 Head Warders and 43 Warders.

JAILS AND
LOCK-UPS

There was a total of 754 convicts (male 734 and female 20) in the district jail during 1972 of whom 663 (male 643 and female 20) were discharged and 91 remained at the close of the year. The average daily number of prisoners was 69.03 males and 9.90 females.

The following table gives the classification of the convicts in the district jail according to different age-groups.

Age-groups	Male	Female
Up to 16 years	18	—
From 16 to 21 years	205	3
From 22 to 30 years	250	6
From 31 to 40 years	70	5
From 41 to 60 years	91	4
Above 60 years	5	—

The classification of prisoners according to their prison terms in the district Jail at Jalpāiguri for the year 1972 is as follows :

Prison terms	Male	Female
Up to 1 month	19	—
From 1 month to 3 months	28	—
From 3 months to 6 months	18	—
From 6 months to 1 year	3	—
From 1 year to 2 years	5	—
From 5 years to 10 years	11	—
Over 10 years	3	—
For life	1	—

The average number sentenced to labour in this jail during 1972 was 63.44. The total credits from jail manufactures amounted Rs. 4,179.95 and total debits to Rs. 3,852.76.

Prison discipline

Only 6 minor offences were committed by the prisoners of Jalpāiguri Jail during 1972.

Welfare of prisoners

A teacher is attached to the district jail for imparting education to the prisoners. There is a library for their use.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

The Bhutan Duārs Act, (Act XVI of 1869) excluded the jurisdiction of ordinary civil courts from suits relating to land in the Bhutan Duārs. The old Rent Law (Act X of 1859) was in force in the Regulation portion of the district. Under this Act Deputy Collectors had jurisdiction to try rent suits of all types and under the provisions of the Bhutan Duārs Act all suits relating to immovable property, revenue and rent were tried by the Deputy Collectors specially empowered by the Government. The Code of Civil Procedure was extended to the Jalpāiguri district in 1882, but did not come into effect in the Western Duārs or Bhutan Duārs until after the repeal of Act XVI of 1869 by Act VII of 1895. After the passage of the latter Act the Code of Civil Procedure was in operation throughout the district.

By the Regulation of 1829, a new set of higher officers, called the Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit, was constituted throughout the Presidency of Bengal. When the district of Jalpāiguri was placed under the Commissioner of Koch Bihar in 1869, he was vested with the powers of a Civil and Sessions Judge. He was authorised to exercise judicial, appellate and controlling authority in the civil and criminal departments accord-

ing to the laws in force. In 1872, the Deputy Commissioner of Jalpāiguri was vested with the powers of a Subordinate Judge. In 1875, a Joint Sessions Judge was appointed for Jalpāiguri to assist the Commissioner in the discharge of his judicial functions. He was invested, in accordance with the provisions of Act VI of 1871, with the powers of a District Judge within these two districts. In 1879, the Jalpāiguri district was included within the jurisdictions of the District and Sessions Judge and the Subordinate Judge of Rangpur. The Divisional Commissioner ceased to act as a Civil Judge and the power of the Deputy Commissioner as a Subordinate Judge was also withdrawn. The latter was re-invested with the power of Subordinate Judge in 1881 when the Sub-Judge of Rangpur ceased to act as the Subordinate Judge for this district. In 1890, the Deputy Commissioner was again divested of the power of a Subordinate Judge. The Sub-Judge of Dinājpur was authorised to hold periodical sittings at Jalpāiguri for disposal of the work of the Sub-Judge's Court of that station. In 1896, the Subdivisional Officer of Ālipur Duārs was vested with the powers of a Munsif within the subdivision. The Jalpāiguri district was included within the local limits of the jurisdiction of the Court of the District and Sessions Judge of Dinājpur in 1906. Sittings were held either at Jalpāiguri or at Dinājpur at the discretion of the District and Sessions Judge. This arrangement continued till Independence in 1947, when the four districts of Dārjiling, Jalpāiguri, Māldāh and West Dinājpur were placed under one judgeship with headquarters at Jalpāiguri. In the same year one Subordinate Judge was appointed for Jalpāiguri and West Dinājpur. He was authorised to hold sittings either at Jalpāiguri or at Bālurghāt. The judgeship for four districts was split up into two judgeships in April 1956, namely, the judgeship for Jalpāiguri-Dārjiling with headquarters at Jalpāiguri and the judgeship for Māldāh-West Dinājpur with headquarters at Māldāh. In 1960, an Additional District and Sessions Judge was appointed at Jalpāiguri. In the same year the power of the Subdivisional Officer as *ex-officio* Munsif of Ālipur Duārs Subdivision was withdrawn and a Munsif was appointed for this subdivision. In 1968, the West Bengal Separation of Judicial and Executive Functions Act was passed. The Act classified Magistrates into two classes, namely, (1) Judicial Magistrates who are appointed in consultation with the High Court and (2) Executive Magistrates who are appointed without such consultation. The former deals primarily with cognizance, investigation, inquiry into and trial of any

offence under the Indian Penal Code or under any other local or special law, while the latter is mainly concerned with prevention of offences and other executive and administrative functions. The functions of the Magistrates were separated by amending the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898. The separation was given effect to in this district from 19 November 1971.

Present set-up

The present set-up for the administration of Civil Justice consists of the District and Sessions Judge at the head (for both the districts of Jalpāiguri and Dārjiling), an Additional District and Sessions Judge (also for both the districts), a Sub-Judge and a Munsif at Jalpāiguri and another at Ālipur Duār.

The work load for 1972 of the courts exercising civil jurisdiction will appear from the following table.

Details of Courts	No. of suits instituted			No. of suits disposed of			No. of suits pending
	Money	Title	Total	Money	Title	Total	Total
District Judge	—	12	12	—	13	13	17*
Addl. District Judge	—	—	—	—	—	—	1*
Sub-Judge Jalpāiguri	33	21	54	23	122	145	168
Munsif, Jalpāiguri	114	147	261	39	247	286	912
Munsif, Ālipur Duār	77	102	179	53	67	120	236

The following table gives the number of the S.C.C. suits instituted, disposed of and pending in different courts of the district at the close of 1972.

Details of courts	No. of S.C.C. suits instituted	No. of S.C.C. suits disposed of	No. of S.C.C. suits left pending
Sub-Judge, Jalpāiguri	61	58	88
Munsif, Jalpāiguri	36	33	142
Munsif, Ālipur Duār	12	6	13

* Figures relate to both the districts of Dārjiling and Jalpāiguri which are under one District Judge.

Besides the District and Sessions Judge (for both the districts of Dārjiling and Jalpāiguri), 1 Additional District and Sessions Judge (for both the districts of Jalpāiguri and Dārjiling) and 1 Assistant Sessions Judge, there are two Subdivisional Judicial Magistrates, one each for Jalpāiguri and Ālipur Duārs, and four Judicial Magistrates (with first class powers) two each for Jalpāiguri and Ālipur Duārs. One of the Judicial Magistrates at Ālipur Duārs also exercises civil powers. The Judicial Magistrates try criminal cases in the district of Jalpāiguri under the provisions of the West Bengal Separation of Judicial and Executive Functions Act, 1968 along with the Executive Magistrates whose jurisdiction has been laid down by the said Act.

Criminal Justice

The table in Appendix B gives the results of trials of criminal cases in different courts of Judicial Magistrates during 1972.

Workload

The table in Appendix B gives the results of trials of criminal courts of sessions of the district.

Court of Sessions	No. of offences reported	No. of persons under trial	Dis-charge/acquitted	Convicted	Died, escaped or transferred to other State	No. of persons remaining under trial at the end of the year	No. of cases disposed of during the year
Assistant Sessions Judge	66	241	106	18	—	117	37
Additional Sessions Judge	25	145	2	6	—	137	2
Sessions Judge	56	149	28	12	1	108	22
Total :	147	535	136	36	1	362	61

There are two Bar Associations, one of pleaders and the other of mukhtears, both at Jalpāiguri and Ālipur Duārs.

LEGAL PROFESSION AND BAR ASSOCIATION

The Probation of Offenders Act, 1958 (Act 20 of 1958) was extended to the District of Jalpāiguri on 9 January 1975 and on the same date a Probation Officer joined there.

Probation of Offenders' Act*

The Act provides for non-institutional treatment for juvenile as well as adult offenders who have committed offences punish-

* Source: Chief Probation Officer, West Bengal.

able other than with death or imprisonment for life and any Court, within the limit of cases triable by it, is empowered to deal with offenders under this Act. The Act intends to reform and rehabilitate offenders through the supervision and guidance of a Probation Officer.

There is a special provision under sec. 6 of the Act imposing restriction on imprisonment of offenders under 21 years of age according to which :

(1) The Court shall call for a report from the Probation Officer and consider that report before sentencing any such offender to imprisonment ; and

(2) The Court shall record its reasons for sentencing any such offender to imprisonment instead of releasing him on probation.

But there is no special provision exclusively for the juvenile, that is, an offender under 18 years of age.

The present Probation Officer is in charge of the whole district and he serves the need of all the criminal courts of the district.

The Deputy Commissioner, Jalpāiguri is the local controlling authority of the Probation Officer, who has his office in the Collectorate. The Probation Officer, and his orderly peon, constitute the administrative set-up of the district, the departmental control being of the Inspector-General of Prisons, West Bengal exercised through the Chief Probation Officer, West Bengal.

No. of juveniles, adolescents and adult offenders dealt with under the Act in the year 1976, were — below 18 years (Juvenile) — 16 ; 18 to below 21 years (Adolescent) — 9 ; and 21 years and above (Adult) — 16.

APPENDIX A

Name of the police station	No. of cases detected		No. of cases convicted		No. of cases compounded		No. of cases filed	
	1968-69	1972-73	1968-69	1972-73	1968-69	1972-73	1968-69	1972-73
Kotwali	231	197	46	1	130	116	50	80
Rajganj	91	52	23	6	52	37	16	7
Maynaguri	380	282	35	6	216	219	129	57
Dhupguri	485	279	125	—	333	263	21	14
Mal	600	491	134	9	400	430	66	46
Matiali	398	157	16	—	271	129	11	28
Nagrakata	347	143	30	1	307	136	10	6
Falakata	311	188	16	4	283	184	12	—
Madarihath	198	398	14	—	178	398	6	—
Birpara	234	48	44	11	188	32	2	5
Alipur Duar	402	270	99	1	205	266	98	3
Kalchini	580	387	218	12	255	361	103	14
Kumargram	160	100	29	2	105	98	26	—

APPENDIX B

Class of tribunals	No. Of Persons Whose Cases Were Disposed Of							
	No. of offences reported	No. of persons under trial	Discharged or acquitted	Convicted	Committed	Died, escaped or transferred to another State	Persons remaining under trial at the end of the year	No. of cases disposed of during the year
Jalpaiguri Subdivision								
Subdivisional Judicial Magistrate	1,179	1,929	370	1,341	62	37	119	1,142
Judicial Magistrate (1st class)	1,148	2,409	779	214	94	9	1,313	58
Judicial Magistrate (1st class)	1,133	2,528	807	255	151	—	1,315	575
Total :	3,450	6,866	1,956	1,810	307	46	2,747	1,775
Alipur Duars Subdivision								
Subdivisional Judicial Magistrate	2,108	4,320	1,302	325	29	—	2,664	828
Judicial Magistrate (1st class)	1,073	3,194	664	371	77	—	2,082	482
Munsif-cum-Judicial Magistrate (1st class)	663	2,115	194	124	42	—	1,755	144
Total :	3,844	9,629	2,160	820	148	—	6,501	1,454

CHAPTER XIII

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

There is an Additional Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department in the district headquarters. Under him there is a Superintending Engineer of the Northern Bengal Circle who is assisted by three Executive Engineers who in their turn are respectively in charge of Jalpāiguri Division, Nagrakata Construction Division and Jalpāiguri Construction Division. They are in their turn helped by Assistant Engineers and Sub-Assistant Engineers. There is also a Superintending Engineer of North Bengal Construction Circle.

PUBLIC WORKS

Under the Additional Chief Engineer, there is the Superintending Engineer, North Bengal Construction Circle II who is assisted by two Executive Engineers who in their turn hold charges of the Ālipur Duār Construction Division and the Torsā Bridge Construction Division. These officers frame necessary estimates for construction and maintenance works. They also maintain old roads and construct new roads, bridges, National Highways, Stateways, etc. The Ālipur Duār Construction Division has built the Primary Health Centre at Jasodāngā. The Jalpāiguri Division has constructed additional blocks in the Jalpāiguri district hospital to provide accommodation for 150 additional permanent beds.¹

There is a Joint Director of Agriculture at the district headquarters who is in charge of the North Bengal districts. The agricultural activities of the district are looked after by a District Agricultural Officer who is assisted by an Agronomist and *ex-officio* Additional Agricultural Officer and Subject Matter Specialist. The work is spread over the 13 development blocks where the work is executed through the Block Development Officers. A BDO is assisted by an Agricultural Extension Officer and an Assistant Agricultural Extension Officer and two or three other field officers. There are also three Assistant Managers in different agricultural farms. The District Agricultural Officer depends on his Directorate for all necessary allotment of funds and sanctions of schemes. The Deputy Commissioner of the district allots funds for cattle purchase loan, fertilizer loan, etc. to the BDO direct. In addition to small irrigation schemes,

AGRICULTURE

¹ Deputy Commissioner, Jalpāiguri — *Jalpāiguri 1973 : Final of the Fourth Five Year-Plan*, Jalpāiguri, 1973, pp. 177.

fertilizers and seeds distribution, programme of high-yielding jute and paddy, the department has been engaged in the distribution of coconut and arecanut seedlings and sugarcane development work.

Agriculture
(Irrigation)
Engineering
Wing

The Executive Engineer, Agriculture (Irrigation), stationed at Jalpāiguri, holds charge of work for three districts, namely, Jalpāiguri, Koch Bihār and Dārjiling. He is assisted by the Assistant Engineer (Agriculture-Irrigation), Jalpāiguri. At the beginning of the fourth Five-year Plan this wing installed and energized 33 deep tube-wells. It also constructed six block seed farms and 39 seed stores. Its normal work is the running and maintaining of all deep tube-wells.

Agriculture
(Mechanical)
Engineering
Wing

The Executive Engineer, Agriculture (Mechanical), Jalpāiguri Division stationed at Jalpāiguri has jurisdiction over Jalpāiguri, Koch Bihār and Dārjiling districts. An Assistant Engineer, Agriculture (Mech.) looks after the work of this district. There are six River Lift Irrigation Schemes functioning in the district. The Assistant Engineer looks after the operation, repairs and maintenance of these diesel-driven pump-sets. The construction work at the site for laying pipe-line, construction of staff quarters and pump houses are done under the direct supervision of the Assistant Engineer. He also maintains and repairs the tractors of the Mohitnagar State Seed Farm.

Agriculture
(Marketing)

A District Agricultural Marketing Officer is stationed at Jalpāiguri. He is assisted by a Subdivisional Agricultural Marketing Officer stationed at the headquarters, who in turn is assisted by three market reporters, one each at Jalpāiguri, Dhupguri and Belākobā. There is another Subdivisional Agricultural Officer at Ālipur Duār who is assisted by two market reporters stationed at Ālipur Duār and Falakata. There is also a Jute Grading Assessor. The DAMO is assisted by a Jute Field Officer and an Inspector, Fruit and Vegetable Preservation schemes. The activities of the department include marketing survey, provision of movement facilities by removing the transport bottle-necks, marketing extension service, dehydration of fruits and vegetables. The department regulates markets under the West Bengal Market Regulation Act, 1972, provides loans for development of markets, looks after warehouses under the West Bengal Warehouse Act, 1963 supervises coal storages under the West Bengal Coal Storage (Licensing and Regulation) Act, 1966 and performs market news service. It also helps in rehabilitation of Toto families practising shifting cultivation at Totopārā.

It helps the Totos to get reasonable prices for their marketable surplus of oranges, bamboos and betel nuts.

There is a District Veterinary Officer in the district town. He controls the seven Veterinary Assistant Surgeons posted in the Development Blocks at Jalpāiguri, Maynāguri, Dhupguri, Rājganj, Māl, Matiali and Nagrakata. He controls two Additional Veterinary Assistant Surgeons posted at Maynāguri and Dhupguri Blocks.

ANIMAL HUSBAN-
DRI AND VETERI-
NARY SERVICES

Veterinary

The District Veterinary Officer is also the District Supervising Authority of the State Veterinary Hospital at Jalpāiguri and of the Mobile Ambulatory Clinic Van at Jalpāiguri. He controls 10 Veterinary Aid Centres located in different Blocks. He is responsible for the welfare, treatment and prevention of diseases of animals of the district. He checks up sudden outbreaks of epidemic diseases among the animals in his area.

There is a Veterinary Pathologist for investigation and confirmation of contagious, infectious and parasitic diseases requiring prompt action.

A Veterinary Field Assistant is attached to each of the 10 Veterinary Aid Centres where they give first aid to ailing animals and birds and vaccinate the animals and birds against contagious diseases in the areas.

There is a Senior Veterinary Surgeon called Elephant Specialist who investigates elephant diseases and treats them.

There is a District Live-stock Officer in the district headquarters who looks after the welfare of the live-stock. The district has about 4,65,162 cattle out of which only 1,55,102 are breeding cows. Of these breeding cows, a small fraction, that is, less than 0.1% has been brought under the Cattle Development Programme in three blocks, namely, Maynāguri, Dhupguri and Fālākātā through the system of natural breeding by improved bulls. The department distributed 50 boars under the Piggery Development scheme to the farmers of Alipur Duār I and II, Dhupguri and Maynāguri development blocks.

Livestock

There is a Superintendent in the State Poultry Farm at Mohitnagar. The State Government has established one Poultry Multiplication Centre at Mohitnagar and one Poultry Extension Centre at Maynāguri. The activities of the poultry farm may be seen in the table follows:

Poultry

PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE POULTRY FARM, MOHITNAGAR:
1967-73

	1967-68	1972-73
Average No. of layers maintained	714	1,245
Average No. of birds maintained (other than layers)	4,488	1,148
Total No. of eggs produced	1,20,974	1,71,895
Total No. of eggs set in the farm	38,362	47,040
Total No. of eggs sold for table purpose	80,175	1,19,958
Total No. of eggs sold for hatching purpose	2,433	3,512
Total No. of chicks produced	27,504	19,075
Total No. of chicks sold for breeding	15,815	15,473
Total expenditure	Rs. 1,03,910.93	Rs. 1,28,229.22
Total receipts	Rs. 58,034.50	Rs. 69,095.12

FISHERIES

The Sadar Subdivision of Jalpāiguri district is under the administrative control of the District Fishery Officer, Dārjiling at Siliguri. One Assistant Fishery Officer is the executive officer for execution of different departmental schemes within the subdivision. The Ālipur Duārs Subdivision is under the administrative control of the District Fishery Officer, Koch Bihār. The Superintendent of Fisheries for the development of Derelict Fisheries Scheme, Siliguri, is in overall charge of Dārjiling, Jalpāiguri and Koch Bihār districts to look after the derelict fisheries. There is a Block Fishery Advisory Committee in each Block.

An amount of Rs. 750 generally is advanced by the Department per bigha of water area to the person who solely possesses the area, for partial reclamation and cultural cost for a period of eleven years only. The fishermen who are in need of assistance for purchase of yarn, making boats and other fishing implements may get assistance by way of loans. A departmental fish farm has also started at Mahārāj Dighi for production and sale of edible fish. Anglers are allowed there during the angling season.

COTTAGE AND
SMALL SCALE
INDUSTRIES

Industries

There is a District Industrial Officer stationed at the district headquarters who is in overall charge in respect of the Cottage and Small Scale Industries programme excluding handloom and sericulture. Two Extension Officers (Industries) assist the District Industrial Officer and are also entrusted with the departmental

work for Māl and Matīālī development blocks. There are also Field Officers of the department, one each for Jalpāiguri, Rājganj, Maynāguri, Dhupguri, Nagrakata, Falakata, Mādārihāt, Kalchini, Ālipur Duār I and II and Kumārgrām blocks.

The Superintendent of Sericulture at Matigarā (Siliguri) looks after sericulture including ericulture of the district. Ericulture is mainly found in Kumārgram, Ālipur Duār II and Kālchini development blocks.

Sericulture

The forest areas of the district are looked after by four Divisional Forest Officers. The DFO, Jalpāiguri Forest Division, has his office at Jalpāiguri. The Division generally produces big size timber suitable for construction work. Every year it fells about 300 hectares of reserved forests area and plants it in the next financial year when an equivalent area is felled again. The process would so continue till all the old forests are covered. The Division gives an average revenue of Rs. 45 lakhs a year.

FOREST

Jalpāiguri Forest Division

The forests of Baikunthapur Division are situated in Rājganj and Māl police stations. There are five Ranges in this Division, namely, Belākobā, Āmbārī, Sarugarāh, 7th Mile and Apalchand. The Divisional Forest Officer in charge of these Ranges of this district is assisted by one Assistant Forest Officer, six Forest Rangers, twenty-seven Deputy Rangers/Foresters and a host of other staff. The annual revenue of this Division is about Rs. 20 lakhs.

Baikunthapur Forest Division, Siliguri

The activities of Koch Bihār Forest Division in this district is confined to Chilāpātā, Nilpara, Madarihat and Jaldāpārā Wild Life Sanctuary Ranges within the Ālipur Duārs Subdivision. The Divisional Forest Officer, Koch Bihār is in overall charge of these Ranges. In Chilāpātā Range, there are four Beats and Camps named Chilāpātā, Bania, Mendabari and Kodāl Basti. In Nilpara Range the Beats and Camps are named Nilpārā, Godāmdabri, Bhūtri and Dalsingpārā. The Madarihat Range has five Beats and Camps, namely, North Khairbārī, Lankāpārā, Dumchi, South Khairbārī and Hollāpārā. In the Jaldapara Range, there are eleven Beats and Camps, namely, Hollong, Shishumāra, Moirādāngā, Jaldapara, Salkumar, Bengdaki, Khowchaydpara, Manikarje Ghat Camp, Daidāghāt Camp, Northwest Corner Beat and Northeast Corner Beat.

Koch Bihār Forest Division

Special Camps have been established within Jaldāpārā Sanctuary to prevent poaching. The Division maintains three elephants to take the tourists around Jaldāpārā Sanctuary. It has a tourist

lodge at Hollong. The construction of a tourist lodge at Mādāri-hāt is also in progress under this Division.

Buxā Forest Division

The Buxā Forest Division is in Ālipur Duārs Subdivision. A Divisional Forest Officer is in charge of this Division. Every year this Division fells about 400 hectares of forest area and the area so felled is planted and maintained at a cost of about Rs. 3 lakhs. The total revenue of the Division during 1972-73 was Rs. 33,48,600.

LABOUR

The Labour Directorate has one Assistant Labour Commissioner, four Labour Officers and two Minimum Wages Inspectors in the district. The Assistant Labour Commissioner is in overall charge of the district in connexion with the administration of labour laws. Two Labour Officers having their headquarters at Jalpāiguri and Ālipur Duār are in charge of enforcement of the Plantations Labour Act, 1951 and rules framed thereunder. One of the two other Labour Officers who is in charge of the implementation of the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965 is posted at Jalpāiguri and the other Labour Officer having his headquarters at Birpārā looks after the conciliation work of the region. In addition to this, the Labour Officer (Plantations) having his headquarters at Siliguri in Dārjiling district enforces the Plantations Labour Act in respect of eleven tea gardens under Jalpāiguri district. Out of the two Minimum Wages Inspectors, one is posted at Jalpāiguri and the other at Birpārā. They look after the enforcement of the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. The Act covers industries like Biḍi, Chaki mills, Rice mills, Oil mills, Flour mills, Printing Press, Cinema, Tailoring shops, Public Motor Transport, Stone breaking and crushing, Agriculture, Leather manufacture, Road construction and Building Operation. The following labour laws are administered in the district : (1) Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; (2) Plantations Labour Act, 1951; (3) Payment of Bonus Act, 1965; (4) Minimum Wages Act, 1948; (5) Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972 and (6) Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946.

The Shops & Establishment Directorate has one Supervising Inspector with headquarters at Ālipur Duār and one Inspector with headquarters at Jalpāiguri. They look after employment, wages, working hours of the persons employed in shops & establishments under the Shops & Establishments Act, 1963. This Act extends to eight places of this district, namely,

Jalpāiguri, Maynāguri, Dhupguri, Gairkātā, Birpara, Falakata, Ālipur Duār and Māl (town area).

The Labour Directorate also administers four Labour Welfare Centres including one Model Labour Welfare Centre in the Plantation Areas of this district. These Centres are situated in close proximity to areas having predominantly Labour population. There are nine Labour Welfare Workers including two Lady Labour Welfare Workers and four Durwan-cum-Night-watchmen in the four Labour Welfare Centres of this district.

The Jalpāiguri Co-operative Range came into being in the year 1961. Prior to 1961, the jurisdiction of this range was included in Dārjiling Range which covered the districts of Dārjiling, Jalpāiguri and Koch Bihār. At present, the jurisdiction of this Range is over the whole of Jalpāiguri district with headquarters at Jalpāiguri. A Government order has re-defined the administrative jurisdiction of the Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Jalpāiguri by which the area of the range has been reduced to Jalpāiguri Subdivision only with effect from 1 July 1973. There are altogether 784 Co-operative Societies in this Range out of which 448 are Agricultural Credit Societies.

CO-OPERATION

There is a District Co-operative Union for the whole of the district of Jalpāiguri. The members of the Union are the Co-operative societies of this district and also individuals. The function of the union is to promote co-operative activities and disseminate information on the movement and educate people in this matter.

District Co-operative Union

The Assistant Controller of Weights and Measures stationed at Koch Bihār has jurisdiction over the districts of Jalpāiguri and Koch Bihār. In the Jalpāiguri district there are two offices of the Weights and Measures organization, one located at Jalpāiguri and the other at Ālipur Duār. They are looked after by two Inspectors of Weights and Measures, one at each place. The principal duties of the Inspectors of Weights and Measures are as follows :

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIES

Weights and Measures

(1) Verification and stamping of weights, measures, weighing instruments and measuring instruments.

(2) Inspection.

(3) Collection of fees and other charges.

(4) Keeping in safe custody of articles seized and detailed in the discharge of his duties.

- (5) Keeping in safe and proper custody the working models and other equipments and appliances entrusted to his charge.
- (6) Conducting of prosecutions under the Act.

INFORMATION
AND PUBLIC
RELATIONS

A District Information and Public Relations Officer is posted in this district. He is the Controlling Officer of the Subdivisional Information and Public Relations Officers of both the Subdivisions and of the Technical Supervisor and his staff of this district. The District Information and Public Relations Officers, Jalpāiguri has the command and control over the two Audio-Visual units placed directly under him.

The Technical Supervisor looks after the maintenance of 271 radio sets installed in the rural areas of the district. The Technical Supervisor has to instal new radio sets in the rural belts when the prayer to have a set from persons concerned gets approval from the Deputy Commissioner. From April 1971 onward, a large number of evacuees came to the district for food and shelter. At that time the I & P R staff held special publicity campaign relating to health and sanitation. They helped the Civil Defence authority during the period of emergency in 1971 by preparing hoardings, pamphlets, leaflets, cinema slides, etc. for display and distribution in Civil Defence areas.

A short summary of work of the Information wing of this district is stated as follows:

Year	No. of film shows	No. of meetings addressed	No. of radio sets	No. of radio rural forum	No. of exhibi- tions
1970	250	152	242	26	4
1971	289	164	256	28	4
1972	399	240	271	38	10

FINANCE
Statistics

There is a District Statistical Officer who is in charge of the district unit of the Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics of the State Government. He is primarily responsible for supervision and direction of collection of data regarding crop survey and *ad hoc* surveys, price collection work and collection of miscellaneous statistics. He is also responsible for supplying statistical information at district level to officers and for coordination of statistical work in the district. He is assisted by a Supervisor, an Inspector, an Assistant Investigator, an Assistant Computer and other staff.

There is one Agricultural Income Tax Officer, Grade I and three Agricultural Income Tax Officers, Grade II at Jalpāiguri. The jurisdiction of the Range is spread over the districts of Jalpāiguri, Dārjiling and the Mekhliganj Subdivision of the Koch Bihār district.

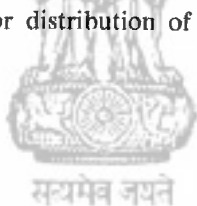
Agricultural
Income Tax

There is a District Rehabilitation Officer under the administrative control of the Deputy Commissioner at the district headquarters who looks after the Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation activities. There is also a Subdivisional Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation Officer at Jalpāiguri and an Additional RRO to assist him. This office has got two branches, namely, Refugees Rehabilitation and Evacuee Relief.

REFUGEE REHA-
BILITATION

There is an Assistant District Controller, Food and Supplies at Jalpāiguri who is entrusted with the work of food procurement and licensing rice and husking mills. There is also a Chief Inspector, Food and Supplies to assist him. Besides, there are four Inspectors who check up the accounts and stock of rice and husking mills. There is also a Subdivisional Controller, Food and Supplies at Jalpāiguri for distribution of cereals under the modified rationing scheme.

FOOD AND
SUPPLIES



CHAPTER XIV

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

History of Local
Self-Government
in the district

The Road Cess
Committee

The district has a chequered history of local self-government. The Bengal Local Self-Government Act came into existence in 1885, but the Road Cess Committee already existed here as in other districts under the District Road Cess Act X (B.C.) of 1871. This Committee had to look after the construction and development of roads, bridges, dak bungalows, etc. The Committee of this district was constituted in 1875-76 and continued up to 1887¹, though work like valuation of estates and tenures and house assessment had started a little before. In 1875-76, the total values of estates and tenures were respectively Rs. 12,76,102 and Rs. 9,09,091 as against the revenue of the district of Rs. 2,73,445. The valuation of estates was thus 4.3 times of the revenue. There were 741 villages liable for house assessment of which 19 villages were assessed that year. Demand for road-cess on lands for the year was Rs. 17,598 while collection was made to the tune of Rs. 15,116 in 1875-76. That year, remission was allowed to the extent of Rs. 55. The percentage of collection of demand thus stood at 85.89. The demand for road-cess on houses in 1875-76 was Rs. 937, collection being Rs. 771 and remission Rs. 76. The percentage of collection on demand on this score was 82.28.² The District Cess Committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner consisted of 21 members, all of whom were nominated by Government. The Committee used to be reconstituted every two years. All the main roads of the district were first laid out by the Cess Board, which derived its income mainly from the Road Cess. Government subsidy was also granted to the Cess Board. In 1878, the District Cess Board had an income of Rs. 39,084 from the Road Cess which was supplemented by Government subsidy to the extent of Rs. 15,000. Cesses on houses were also realised as the figures above would show, but were discontinued later in 1879. The office of the Cess Board was located in a room of the 'Iron House' in the town owned by the Maharaja of Cooch Behar. This house was later called Nripendranarayan Hall after the name of the Maharaja. The Cess Board, apart

¹ S. Ghosh — 'Śatavarṣer Darpane Jelār Svāyattvaśāsan' in *Jalpāiguri District Centenary Souvenir : 1869-1969*, ed. C. C. Sanyal and others, Jalpāiguri, 1970, p. 237.

² Source : *Annual Administration Report of Bengal : 1875-76*.

from the roads, constructed several bridges throughout the district between 1876 and 1887 even though there was paucity of fund. This Board built a bridge on the Karla river at Dinbazar within Jalpāiguri town at a cost of Rs. 3,000 in 1878. That very year the road between the Railway stations here and Dinajpur was laid out at a cost of Rs. 2,311. In 1880, a big iron-bridge was constructed at a cost of Rs. 24,100 over the Karla river, the work for which was entrusted to Messrs. Mitchell & Co. of Calcutta. In 1879, the Cess Board began planting trees on both sides of the main roads. Some rubber figs were planted on Paharpur Road in Jalpāiguri town.

This Board once resolved in 1886-87 to lay down tramways in the district from Barnes to Chalsa *via* Maynaguri and Lataguri. Two branches were also proposed to be constructed, one from Maynaguri to Falakata *via* Dhupguri and the other up to Nagrakata. The last meeting of the Cess Board held on 20 January 1887 keenly discussed the construction of the tramways.

The District Board constituted under Act III (B.C.) of 1885 stepped into the local self-government administration of the district in 3 May 1887 and continued its service for the development of the rural areas till 1964 when the Zilla Parishad came into existence. The District Board inherited the control of roads, bridges, ferries and dak bungalows from the Cess Board and itself started looking after primary education, rural health, medical and veterinary services. It also supervised the Local Boards, Union Boards, etc. and was in charge of pounds and fairs. The District Board was then headed by the Deputy Commissioner and had 16 members, all nominated by Government. The term of office of the Board continued for five years. The first non-official Chairman of the Board started functioning from 15 May 1921, and the Board had altogether 21 members on 3 June 1922. The District Board, which was housed in Nripendranarayan Hall since the abolition of the Cess Board, was shifted to its own building in 1889.

District Board

As to its activities, the District Board looked after 78 ferries, 147 pounds and 10 dak bungalows of the district and controlled road-length to the extent of about 558 miles during the last days of its existence. This Board also looked after the primary education in the district till the District School Board was constituted in 1936 to do the said work. At the time of constitution of the District School Board there were as many as 765 primary schools in the district which obtained subsidy from the District Board.

The Board set up charitable dispensaries at Boda, Pachagarh, Tentulia, Rajganj, Mal, Samuktala, etc. After the promulgation of the Bengal Public Health Act in 1919, a District Health Officer was for the first time posted in the district by the Board in 1921. It had 12 charitable dispensaries for which expenditures of Rs. 61,967 and Rs. 57,430 were incurred in 1952-53 and 1953-54 respectively. The Board also set up a Public Health laboratory at Jalpāiguri in 1937 in which food articles came up for examination. The public health welfare activities were looked after by the Board till 1959 when the State Government took over the entire responsibility of such activities. The Board also looked after the schemes for drinking water supply. It had as many as 10 dak bungalows, one each at Jalpāiguri, Maynaguri, Mal, Dhupguri, Falakata, Madarihat, Ālipur Duār, Kumargram, Kamakhyaguri and Kalchini. The income of the Board on all accounts was Rs. 4,60,413 and Rs. 4,47,972 in 1952-53 and 1953-54 respectively.

Local Boards

The Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885 provided for Local Boards, and the Ālipur Duārs Local Board at the subdivisional level was formed in 1899 and the sanction to its formation was accorded in January 1900, though work commenced only in 1900-01. The Jalpāiguri Local Board in the Jalpāiguri Sadar subdivision came into existence very late on 1 December 1930. The Annual Administration Report of Bengal for the year 1928-29, however, openly comments about Local Boards thus: "Beyond their function as electoral colleges for district boards it cannot be said that local boards, with their delegated resources and powers, attract great interests; and it is primarily to meet the legal position arising from the establishment of union boards in Jalpaiguri... that their number is being increased." Both the institutions were, however, abolished on 1 January 1948 and the members of the staff absorbed by the District Board. The District Board donated some amount of money to the Local Boards with which the latter used to repair roads, sink wells, etc. These Boards also settled disputes between two Union Boards over the issues regarding boundary, ownership of pounds or ferries, etc. The Local Boards also approved of the pay of the staff of the Union Boards. At first, these Boards were constituted of members nominated by Government, though later non-official members were also drafted.

Union Boards

There was no Union Board or Union Committee as late as 1929 owing perhaps to the backwardness of the district, scanty

habitation, occupation of land by the tea industry, etc. The tea garden authorities themselves looked after the roads and public health in their areas, and hence no rural organisation was necessary to look after them for years. The Union Boards came into existence in Boda, Pachagarh, Tentulia, Rajganj, Kotwali, etc. only in 1930. In 1947, there were as many as 120 Union Boards in the district of which 44 unions conterminous with 5 police stations went over to E. Pakistan. The Union Boards existing in this district were distributed among the police stations as follows: Jalpāiguri 12, Rajganj 10, Maynaguri 10, Dhupguri 7, Mal 8, Matiali 1, Nagrakata 2, Falakata 6, Madarihat 2, Kumargram 4, Kalchini 2 and Ālipur Duār 12. The annual income of a Union Board was roughly Rs. 4,000 in the 1960s and the expenditure roughly Rs. 3,500.

After Independence a four-tier system of local self-government came into existence. The Balwantraj Gopaljee Mehta Commission was appointed to examine the rural self-governing institutions on the basis of which report the Panchayati Raj stepped into rural society, with a slight divergence from the all-India pattern. In West Bengal, the four-tier system with the *gram sabha* at the lowest rung has been accepted unlike the three-tier system prevailing elsewhere in India.

As already stated, the Zilla Parishad came to be formed in the district on the remains of the defunct District Board under the provisions of the West Bengal *Zilla Parishads Act, 1963*¹. The watchword for the innovation was 'democratic decentralisation and people's participation'. As to its economic resources for a particular year, the Zilla Parishad of the district had a total income of Rs. 24,28,340 including the total receipts for the year to the extent of Rs. 4,90,499 in 1970-71. The closing balance that year was Rs. 9,46,153 after the total expenditure of Rs. 14,82,187. The table depicting the income and expenditure position of the Parishad on all accounts in 1970-71 has been placed in Appendix A. The Zilla Parishad is under the charge of an Administrator. It maintains 139 km. surfaced roads, 495 km. unsurfaced roads, 1,670 ring-wells, 17 tube-wells, 8 dispensaries, 9 inspection bungalows and 76 ferries managed through lessees.

Zilla Parishad

¹ "An Act to provide for the re-modelling of Local Government with a view to associating the local authorities with development activities and bringing about democratic decentralisation and people's participation, in planning and development" (*vide* Preamble to the Act).

Anchalik
Parishad

There are as many as 13 Anchalik Parishads in the district mostly conterminous with the Development Block areas. They were formed under the provisions of the West Bengal *Zilla Parishads Act, 1963*. The discrepancy in the areas of the Blocks and the Parishads in some cases may be accounted for by the fact that while the block areas sprawl over forests, the Parishad areas do not. Besides, it may be that all the former Union Boards did not come under the purview of the Parishads at the time of collection of the report. The following table shows the income and expenditure of the said Parishads in 1970-71.

ANCHALIK PARISHADS IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1970-71

Name	Area in sq. miles		Income (Rs.)	Expenditure (Rs.)
	Block	Anchalik Parishad		
Ālipur Duār I	100.04	100.04	24,298	8,052
Ālipur Duār II	169.59	169.59	16,315	4,957
Dhupguri	216.88	121.73	8,016	5,894
Falakata	122.06	107.07	18,070	6,047
Jalpāiguri	185.06	185.06	17,951	4,504
Kalchini	344.00	31.00	11,062	5,618
Kumargram	194.09	128.09	18,394	13,352
Madarihat	182.00	182.00	14,243	9,404
Maynaguri	251.53	184.98	23,289	3,548
Mal	119.40	119.40	28,630	17,956
Matiali	78.19	20.04	13,745	5,165
Nagrakata	23.88	23.88	15,826	5,994
Rajganj	245.08	231.97	17,270	5,519

The incomes consisted of sums specified for schemes, collections from different heads of account, grants from the State Government, etc. The expenditure, on the other hand, consisted mainly of salaries, office expenses and schemes for development work.

The Anchal Panchayats constituted under the West Bengal *Panchayat Act, 1957*, roughly correspond to the old Union Boards numbered 92 in the district. The following table shows the number of Anchal Panchayats under each Anchalik Parishad and other relevant particulars.

Anchal
Panchayats

ANCHAL PANCHAYATS IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1970-71

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

243

No. of taxes, rates and fees
payers

Name of the Anchalik Parishad	No. of Anchal Panchayats	No. of house- holders in Anchal Panchayats	For lands and buildings	For trades & professions	For conservancy, registration of vehicles, etc.	Total No. of members Men Women	No. of meetings attendance
Alipur Duār I	8	13,391	12,378	361	1,189	126 —	52 10
Alipur Duār II	8	20,156	13,131	11,098	1,613	175 —	73 9
Dhupguri	8	26,255	19,793	2,485	3,253	180 —	81 12
Falakata	7	15,645	11,598	1,121	1,570	175 —	48 7
Jalpāiguri	13	40,392	35,392	3,010	1,270	163 1	76 10
Kalchini	4	3,372	3,372	627	632	33 —	51 6
Kumargram	5	12,640	11,340	1,194	1,000	170 —	65 7
Madarihat	4	3,428	3,362	888	481	58 —	49 6
Maynaguri	11	27,209	16,796	5,066	1,688	285 —	95 12
Mal	10	9,567	6,227	5,479	1,566	104 —	83 8
Matiali	2	2,161	2,161	713	307	37 —	7 5
Nagrakata	2	2,405	2,833	104	63	30 —	20 9
Rajganj	10	17,352	15,494	3,376	2,162	137 —	121 5

Unlike the Union Boards, the Anchal Panchayats show bigger resources. They not only receive taxes, rates, fees, etc. under different sections of the relevant Act, but also receive grants and contributions from the State Government towards the salaries of their establishment consisting of Secretaries, Dafadars and Chowkidars, and lump grants for development activities. They also receive funds from other sources for varied schemes. The income and expenditure position for the year 1970-71 of the Anchal Panchayats of the district has been set forth in Appendix B. The table at page 244 depicts the trend of assessment under different heads of account as obtaining in 1970-71.

Gram
Panchayats

Unlike many other states of India, this State has Gram Panchayats as the lowest rung of the ladder of rural self-government under the West Bengal *Panchayat* Act, 1957. Mainly concerned with public health the Gram Panchayats constituted out of Gram Sabhas, has a host of other miscellaneous welfare activities like primary education, co-operative work, etc. The Income and Expenditure position of the Gram Panchayats of the district as in 1970-71 has been set forth in Appendix C. The following table shows the constitution of the Gram Panchayats of the district.

GRAM PANCHAYATS IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1970-71

Name of the Anchalik Parishad	No. of Gram Panchayats under the Anchalik Parishad	Total No. of members of the Gram Panchayat		No. of meetings of the Gram Panchayat	No. of informal meetings of the Gram Sabhas
		Men	Women		
Alipur Duār I	42	543	2	156	26
Alipur Duār II	63	718	—	213	40
Dhupguri	51	602	—	123	49
Falakata	51	537	2	88	4
Jalpāiguri	70	862	3	305	—
Kalchini	14	160	2	101	8
Kumargram	32	359	—	100	24
Madarihat	24	237	2	88	36
Maynaguri	84	947	15	480	98
Māl	51	572	4	281	21
Matiali	10	127	—	34	1
Nagrakata	9	125	1	54	—
Rajganj	65	750	6	247	105

TRENDS OF ASSESSMENT (INCLUDING CURRENT AND ARREAR) OF THE ANCHAL PANCHAYATS IN JALPĀIGURI
DISTRICT : 1970-71 (IN RUPEES)

Name of the Anchalik Parishad	Rates on lands and buildings		Rates on professions, trades, etc.		Fees on the registration of vehicles		Rates for street lighting		Total	
	Demand	Realisation	Demand	Realisation	Demand	Realisation	Demand	Realisation		
Alipur Duār I	69,696	14,198	5,102	1,250	9,175	531	—	—	83,975	15,981
Alipur Duār II	66,673	20,487	15,305	2,151	8,669	1,388	—	—	90,648	24,027
Dhupguri	70,393	27,388	24,848	6,467	8,057	1,081	—	—	1,03,299	34,937
Falakata	75,302	27,188	10,332	2,822	8,304	1,570	1,272	120	95,211	31,700
Jalpāiguri	88,215	39,460	10,539	2,105	5,944	1,226	—	—	1,04,698	42,791
Kalchini	37,405	4,222	7,279	150	5,638	436	—	—	50,323	4,808
Kumargram	40,385	12,209	5,954	1,374	2,533	543	—	—	48,872	14,126
Madarihat	20,987	10,433	8,270	3,194	1,996	770	—	—	31,253	14,398
Maynaguri	80,426	20,593	28,215	7,935	7,366	674	2,600	762	1,18,609	29,966
Mal	39,836	14,482	25,810	12,536	9,029	2,360	2,273	557	76,948	29,936
Matiali	16,881	1,941	4,604	882	2,050	195	—	—	23,536	3,018
Nagrakata	15,157	6,174	801	387	2,366	195	—	—	18,324	6,757
Rajganj	89,701	38,658	26,355	10,681	11,076	3,820	10,386	5,270	1,37,519	58,430

New Develop-
ments

The latest approach to the Panchayat organisation shows leanings towards the all-India pattern inasmuch as the bill styled 'The West Bengal Panchayat Bill, 1973' which is going to be placed before the State Legislature soon replaces the Anchal Panchayat organisation by Panchayat Samiti at the middle rung of the ladder of the Panchayat system. Thus, it is expected that in future there will be a three-tier system consisting of Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad replacing the present four-tier system consisting of Gram Panchayat, Anchalik Parishad, Anchal Panchayat and Zilla Parishad. Besides, the rural police consisting of Chowkidars and Dafadars will be fully paid staff of the Government. The Panchayat Samiti, a larger body than the Anchalik Parishad and consisting of elected representatives of the people will be connected with the planning and execution of all development programmes at the Block level.

Jalpāiguri
Municipality

With the formation of the Jalpāiguri township near about 1869, the need for setting up municipal administration was felt. The tea plantations in the district, starting about 1877, also required an urban headquarters in Jalpāiguri. Naturally, the population of the township increased and the municipal activities were looked after by an organisation named 'Jalpāiguri Union' till in 1 April 1885 the Jalpāiguri Municipality came into being with a population of 7,936 and 1,389 rate payers in 1886-87. At first, it had 13 members nominated by Government, the Deputy Commissioner being the Chairman and the Civil Medical Officer the Vice-Chairman. In 1911, it consisted of 16 Commissioners, of whom 3 were *ex officio*, the Deputy Commissioner being the Chairman 3 were nominated by the Government, and the remaining 10 were elected, the town being divided into 5 wards for the purpose.¹ The Municipality continued to function under official aegis till 1916, though a non-official Vice-Chairman was nominated to the organisation in 1887. The budget of the Municipality for the year 1886 showed estimates for Rs. 5,398 only. The Municipality permitted Rani Jagadisvari of Baikunthapur to establish a market in Dinbazar in 1887. The Municipal area was surveyed in 1890, and the first non-official Chairman was elected in 1916-17. Since then non-official Chairmen began functioning in the organisation. The Municipality was divided into 7 wards electing 19 Commissioners. In 1967, it was divided into 19 one-member ward, but

¹ J. P. Gruning -- op. cit. p. 137.

the elected members could not take charge of office on account of litigation.

During its long existence the Municipality was superseded by Government twice, in 1958 and in 1966. In 1971-72, a Board of 18 Commissioners elected out of 19 seats under the scheme of single-member constituency ran the administration for the benefit of 55,345 people of the town including 5,286 rate-payers. The rate-payers thus formed 9 per cent of the total population in the town. In 1910, the number of rate-payers was 1,572 there forming 15.36 per cent of the population.

There was no provision for drinking water supply in the town before 1935, though a futile attempt to sink tube-wells was made in 1889 by the then Municipality. A few wells were also sunk later. The Jalpāiguri waterworks came into being in 1935 to ensure pure water supply to the citizens of the town. The District Board paid Rs. 10,000 to the Municipality as its contribution to the waterworks scheme in 1935-36. The first two pumping stations, lifting 14,000 gallons of water per hour, were erected with the financial help obtained from a generous gentleman of the town, but they are not in order now. Two other pumps were later set up by the Municipality which had a capacity for lifting 24,000 gallons of water per hour. In 1972, there were also 82 hydrants by the roads and 391 house connections¹ under the Municipality. At present (1972), the Municipality has 4 deep tube-wells from which water is electrically pumped out and then passed through the elimination plant for eliminating excess iron from water. After chlorinisation the water is supplied to consumers through underground pipe lines. The iron-eliminating and chlorinating plant was installed towards the close of 1935-36. The Municipality have prepared a schemes of Rs. 24 lakhs for reorganisation of water supply in the town and have taken up the matter with the State Government.

Water Supply

The Municipality runs 6 primary schools and 1 night school for which it spent Rs. 22,828 in 1955-56, Rs. 26,809 in 1956-57, Rs. 51,458 in 1967-68 and Rs. 28,573 in 1971-72. The entire cost of running the institutions is borne by the Municipality without any charge for the purpose from the citizens.

Education

As to public health activities, the first vaccinator was appointed in the Municipality in 1889. In 1956-57 and 1967-68,

¹ S. Ghosh — op. cit., p. 235.

vaccinations numbering 40,831 and 11,137 respectively were done by the Municipality while in 1971-72, 20,269 persons were vaccinated, of whom 1,330 were primary cases. 2,276 persons had TABC inoculation and 5,000 persons had AC inoculation the same year. Besides, 268 specimens of stale or adulterated food were taken of which 54 specimens were finally proved to be adulterated on chemical examination. In 1967-68, 68 such specimens were taken. Disinfection of wells numbered 3,735 in 1971-72. In 1971-72, there were 2,381 and 1,402 births and deaths, being respectively 4.30% and 2.53% of the population, in the town as per municipal records. The conservancy work of the municipality like removal of night-soil, road-cleaning and road-watering is partly mechanised. There were 1,976 sanitary latrines and 2,764 service latrines in the town in 1971-72; and 266 workers were engaged in conservancy and drain clearance work.

Street lighting

A private limited company named Jalpāiguri Electric Supply Co. Ltd. began to supply electric power since 1934 for running the municipal water works and for lighting about 600 lamps in the municipal roads. In 1972, there were 652 street lights in the town, power being supplied by the West Bengal State Electricity Board. The Municipality also arrange for improvised lighting during Durga Puja and other festivals.

Town Compost Manure Scheme

The Municipality produce compost manure with night-soil and street-sweepings for distribution to agriculturists. The scheme suffered damages during the flood of 1969. The Municipality could only distribute 245 tons of compost manure in 1971-72 to agriculturists.

Drainage

Drainage is a problem with this town for a long time; and during the rains a considerable portion of the town remain water-logged for days.¹ There being no embankments on the river Karla, river water overflows the banks and inundates the neighbouring region. The Municipality spent Rs. 95,468 in 1971-72 for repair and maintenance of the existing drains in the town.

Market

The Municipality has a market of its own, constructed in 1958

¹ Cf. J. F. Gruning — op. cit., p. 138 : "The principal requirements of the Municipality are the improvement of the system of drainage, and the filling up of the pits and hollows which form pools of stagnant water during the rains, and contribute largely to the unhealthiness of the town. The drainage of part of the town is towards the Karla river and of the other part towards the low-lying fields beyond the railway embankment."

with a loan received from the Refugee Relief & Rehabilitation Department of the State Government. Nevertheless, the market never became a source of revenue income for the Municipality.

It has a length of 29.7 km. of *pucca* road and 29.8 km. of *kutchra* road within the town. During 1971-72, it spent a sum of Rs. 40,115 for improvement of roads and culverts. Out of this amount, a sum of Rs. 1,538 was spent from Government grant for expenditure on communication, Rs. 1,708 from Development grant, Rs. 12,941 from Government loan fund and the balance of Rs. 23,923 from the Municipal fund. Government also sanctioned a grant of Rs. 19,486 for expenditure on communication which was scheduled to be spent in 1972-73. The roads of the town require repair and renovation because of the damages caused by floods almost every year.

Roads & Culverts

The financial resources of the Municipality can be gauged from the following. During the 10 years ending in 1901-02 the average annual income was Rs. 19,959. In 1904-05 and 1905-06, the income was respectively Rs. 72,582 and Rs. 56,814, inclusive of Government grants. The expenditure during the decade ending 1901-02 averaged Rs. 18,354 a year. In 1904-05 and 1905-06, it was Rs. 68,361 and Rs. 74,804 respectively including the cost of the new hospital building and furniture.

Income & Expenditure

In 1967-68, the total earnings of the Municipality were Rs. 7,37,911 and the total expenditure Rs. 7,67,173, the shortfall being made up from the balance of the previous year.

In 1971-72, the total income and expenditure of the Municipality were to the extent of Rs. 13,17,845 and Rs. 11,83,336 respectively.

In 1971-72, the demand of tax was to the extent of Rs. 10,96,767, while the collection and remission were to the extent of Rs. 5,45,433 and Rs. 5,579.

Demand & Collection

The Ālipur Duār Municipality was established on 7 February 1957. It sprawls over 9.30 sq. km. and has a population of 36,767 according to the Census of 1971. The number of rate-payers here was 5,484 forming 14.9 per cent of the total population. As to its varied activities, the Municipality sunk 10 tube-wells and re-sunk 36 tube-wells during 1971-72. The tube-wells under municipal control so far numbered 144 in 1971-72. A new scheme with Government aid for augmenting water supply at a cost of Rs. 19,40,000 has been taken up for implementation. Four tube-wells have since been sunk in two

Ālipur Duār Municipality

Water supply

zones, one in the old town area, and the other in the new town area.

Street lighting

There were as many as 330 street lights in 1971-72 to which electricity was supplied by the West Bengal State Electricity Board.

Market

The Municipality has no market of its own, but it exercises control, supervision and care over two markets of the town, one of which is owned by the Land and Land Revenue Department and the other was established by refugees from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

Pound

The only pound, located here, was so long managed by the Jalpāiguri Zilla Parishad, and has been transferred to the Municipality for management with effect from 1 April 1968.

Road

The municipality owned a length of 13 km. of *pucca* road and 49 km. of *kutcha* road during 1971-72.

Public Health

In 1971-72, 12,099 persons were vaccinated, of which 1,199 were primary and 11,900 re-vaccination cases. AC inoculations were given to 9,840 persons, while TABC inoculations were given to 804 persons the same year. Triple-Antigen was also given to 275 children. Disinfection was also effected in 53 wells and 72 houses that year.

Income &
Expenditure

The Municipality had an income of Rs. 5,97,272 and an expenditure of Rs. 5,96,008 in 1971-72.¹ The demand, collection and remission figures of the Municipality for the year amounted to Rs. 6,74,826, Rs. 1,36,364 and Rs. 1,903 respectively.

सत्यमेव जयते

¹ In the first year of its establishment (1957-58) it had a total receipt of Rs. 6,404 and a total expenditure of Rs. 8,075. In 1958-59, 1959-60 and 1960-61, its total receipts amounted respectively to Rs. 19,806, Rs. 31,261 and Rs. 52,475 and expenditures to Rs. 31,589, Rs. 58,286 and Rs. 48,744. vide B. Ray, Census 1961 : West Bengal : District Census Handbook : Jalpaiguri. Calcutta, 1969, p. 419.

APPENDIX A

INCOME OF JALPAIGURI ZILLA PARISHAD : 1970-71
(IN RUPEES)

Table — I		Rs
Opening	For Specific Schemes ...	14,56,686
Balance	Untied Funds ...	4,81,154
Grants, etc.	Land revenue ...	76,783
made by	Augmentation ...	7,440
Govt. for	Subvention for D.A. to the employees ...	75,440
	Contribution and grants from Anchalik Parishads ...	1,000
	Proceeds of Road Cess ...	2,40,000
	Receipts from tolls, etc. ...	9,280
	Receipts from institutions ...	17,700
	All other receipts ...	8,038
	Debts, deposits and advances ...	54,501
	Total receipts ...	4,90,499
	Total income including opening balance ...	24,28,340

EXPENDITURE OF JALPAIGURI ZILLA PARISHAD : 1970-71
(IN RUPEES)

Table — II		
	Salaries of personnel ...	1,61,260
Salaries of	To personnel ...	2,752
personnel	To members of the Parishad ...	20
	Office charges ...	6,938
Grants for	Schemes through Anchalik Parishads ...	11,03,004
	Schemes entrusted by the State Government ...	13,555
Grants for	Public utility services ...	1,25,294
	Public institutions ...	10,330
	Scholarships, etc. ...	489
	Other expenditure ...	30,725
	Debts, deposits and advances ...	27,815
	Total expenditure ...	14,82,187
Closing	For specific Schemes ...	3,47,544
Balance	Untied Funds ...	5,98,601

APPENDIX B

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF THE ANCHAL PANCHAYATS IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1970-71
(ROUNDED OFF TO THE NEAREST THOUSAND RUPEES)

Name of the Anchalik Parishad	Opening Balance		Total Rates & fees realised	Grants received from the State Govt. for					Receipt from other sources	Total income	Total expenditure	Closing Balance
	For Schemes	For Untied funds		Pay of Secretaries & Dufadars	Pay of Chowkidars	Develop- ment work						
Alipur Duār I	—	13,000	16,000	17,000	13,000	10,000	8,000	77,000	60,000	17,000		
Alipur Duār II	—	22,000	24,000	16,000	17,000	10,000	9,000	98,000	75,000	23,000		
Dhupguri	7,000	17,000	35,000	16,000	17,000	10,000	12,000	1,14,000	24,000	90,000		
Falakata	—	18,000	32,000	13,000	16,000	9,000	11,000	99,000	73,000	26,000		
Jalpāiguri	—	47,000	43,000	24,000	23,000	17,000	18,000	1,72,000	1,11,000	61,000		
Kalchini	—	8,000	5,000	6,000	4,000	—	3,000	26,000	19,000	7,000		
Kumargram	—	13,000	14,000	8,000	7,000	6,000	7,000	55,000	38,000	17,000		
Madarihat	—	17,000	15,000	8,000	7,000	6,000	7,000	60,000	42,000	18,000		
Maynaguri	31,000	23,000	30,000	23,000	24,000	4,000	14,000	1,26,000	1,00,000	26,000		
Mal	27,000	—	30,000	20,000	17,000	13,000	16,000	1,23,000	93,000	30,000		
Matiali	—	8,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	2,000	3,000	22,000	15,000	7,000		
Nagrakata	—	10,000	7,000	4,000	3,000	2,000	4,000	30,000	18,000	12,000		
Rajganj	36,000	20,000	58,000	20,000	17,000	13,000	14,000	1,58,000	1,06,000	52,000		

APPENDIX C

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF THE GRAM PANCHAYATS IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1970-71 (ROUNDED OFF TO THE NEAREST THOUSAND RUPEES)

Name of the Anchalik Parishad	INCOME			EXPENDITURE					CLOSING BALANCE		
	Opening Balance	Allotment from Anchal		Receipts from gifts, endow- ments etc.	Total	For develop- ment work	On other heads	Total	For Special Schemes	United funds	Total
		For Special Scheme	From the State Govt.									Panchayats From own sources
Alipur Duar I	—	1,000	6,000	—	7,000	7,000	—	7,000	—	1,000	—
Alipur Duar II	—	9,000	10,000	2,000	21,000	7,000	1,000	8,000	—	12,000	13,000
Dhupguri	—	1,000	10,000	6,000	21,000	18,000	1,000	19,000	2,000	—	2,000
Falakata	—	6,000	8,000	—	14,000	9,000	1,000	10,000	—	5,000	4,000
Jalpāiguri	—	6,000	17,000	—	25,000	8,000	2,000	10,000	—	15,000	15,000
Kalchini	—	3,000	—	3,000	6,000	3,000	—	3,000	—	2,000	3,000
Kumargram	—	6,000	3,000	—	10,000	6,000	—	6,000	—	4,000	4,000
Madarihat	3,000	4,000	6,000	2,000	16,000	12,000	2,000	14,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Maynaguri	1,000	—	12,000	—	14,000	9,000	—	9,000	—	4,000	5,000
Mal	10,000	1,000	13,000	11,000	35,000	29,000	—	29,000	5,000	1,000	6,000
Matiali	—	3,000	3,000	—	6,000	1,000	1,000	2,000	—	3,000	4,000
Nagrakata	—	3,000	2,000	—	5,000	2,000	1,000	3,000	—	3,000	2,000
Rajganj	—	13,000	13,000	10,000	38,000	18,000	4,000	22,000	—	17,000	16,000

CHAPTER XV

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

It is doubtful if there were any well-known centres of learning in the district in the ancient and medieval times. The Census of 1872, which is the earliest, recorded 19 primary schools having 283 students and 22 teachers. The first High English School of the district, namely, the Jalpāiguri Zilla School, was established in 1876. In 1875-76,¹ there were 153 schools with 3,263 students on the rolls. The average number of square miles to each school was 18.992 and the percentage of school to population was .031.

In 1879, there were only 64 schools, attended by 1,372 students, while in 1907-08 the number of schools rose to 418 and the number of students to 12,196. In 1907-08, there were 13 schools for every 100 sq. miles, and one school for every 1,929 people. That year, boys to the extent of 17.4 per cent and girls to the extent of 1.7 per cent, or 10.1 per cent of the total population of school-going age were at school. There was a Normal School in Jalpāiguri town (possibly established in 1871) which was transferred to Rangpur in 1878. A Sadar Middle Vernacular School remained at Jalpāiguri. Such vernacular schools were also established in Chandanbati, Debiganj, Maynaguri, Jorpakri, Saptibari, Sikarpur (Bhelakoba), etc. A Middle English School is said to have been established in Falakata in 1893. The early primary schools were located in Falataka, Berubari Majhgram, Gomastapara, Sikarpur, Bhurangor Bari, Pultali, Saptibari (Batteli) and Bhuskadanga.²

The Cess Committee and the District Board were respectively established in 1884 and 1887, and a number of schools appear to have been established during these years, probably under their patronage.

As regards education in the Western Duars it has been estimated that in the last decade of the 19th century, about 96 per cent of the people were illiterate. It has been said that owing to the shortage of man power and the difficulty in engaging culti-

¹ Report on the Administration of Bengal, 1875-76, p. clxxii.

² A. K. Pakrashi, 'Jalpāiguri Jelay Śikshāvistārer Rup-rekhā', in *Jalpāiguri Jēlā Śatavārshiki Śmāraṅk Grantha*, ed. C. C. Sanyal and others, Jalpāiguri 1970, p. 169.

vators, the inaccessible jungle areas and want of roads, the jotedars objected to their children going to school. They thought that children would leave ploughing and take to writing petitions or doing 'Babagiri' (acting the Babu).¹ The jotedars spent Rs. 3,340 between 1893-95 for education. In March 1898 there were 98 schools (including Middle English, Upper Primary and Lower Primary), in Maynaguri, Falakata, Alipur Duār and Bhalka *tahsils* with 2,260 students in all.² In the present century the Duars area has developed educationally and culturally.

There has been an all round quantitative development in education since 1947. The number of Primary Schools has doubled, while the number of students in those schools has increased by four times during the two decades beginning from 1947. Middle Schools also doubled during that period with a four-fold increase in the number of students in them. High Schools have increased six times during these years with an increase of eight times and a half in the number of students. The number of colleges has trebled, and students there have increased by eight times. As to technical education new institutions have grown during this period. There are also teachers' training institutions in the district.

There were 15 boys' High Schools and 1 girls' High School just before the Independence of India (1947). The following table gives the names of schools with the dates of recognition as existing in the district prior to Independence.

RECOGNIZED HIGH SCHOOLS IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1947

Name	Year of recognition	Type	Remarks
Jalpāiguri Zilla School	1876*	Boys'	* Probable date
Alipur Duār High English School	1919	„	
Fanindradeva Institution, Jalpāiguri	1920	„	
Jalpāiguri Sadar Girls' School	1927	Girls'	

¹ D. N. E. Gunder, *Survey and Settlement of the Western Duars in the District of Jalpaiguri*, Calcutta, 1895, p. 90.

² *Loc. cit.*

Name	Year of recognition	Type	Remarks
Domohani Polwhele High English School	1927	Co-educational	
Sonaulla Institution, Jalpāiguri	1929	Boys'	
Bhelakoba (formerly Waliar Rahman) High English School	1943	„	
(Bakali) Dharmapur Abdul Karim High English School	1945	„	Abolished in 1951
Dhupguri High English School	1946	„	
Jorpakri Abdul Gani High English School	1947	„	
McWilliam High English School	1947	„	
Mandalghat High English School	1947	„	Abolished in 1948

There were 22 High Schools in the district in 1957-58 with a roll strength of 4,993 boys and 1,213 girls. In 1963-64, the number of schools rose to 35, and the roll strength to 7,072 boys and 4,105 girls. Higher Secondary (including Multipurpose) schools numbered 13 and 24 respectively in 1957-58 and 1963-64 with a roll strength of 3,872 boys and 8,330 girls in the former year and 1,919 boys and 3,456 girls in the latter. As on 1 August 1971 there were 1,464 boys and 1,476 girls in the Higher Secondary Schools; 10,249 boys and 4,406 girls in the High Schools and 14,078 boys and 7,542 girls in the Multipurpose Schools of the district. A report says that in 1963-64 the number of Secondary (High and Higher) School teachers was as follows: 969 males and 317 females.¹

Middle English Schools numbered 21 for boys and 2 for girls on 15 August 1947. Besides, there were 5 Junior *Madrassas* for boys and 1 *Madrasa* for girls at that time which were abolished in 1950, and converted into High Schools or Junior High Schools for boys and girls subsequently.

¹ Government of West Bengal, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, *Statistical Atlas of West Bengal*; 1967, Calcutta, 1969, p. 52.

The following table gives the names of the Middle English schools that were existing in the district in 1947. All but one still exist.

RECOGNIZED MIDDLE ENGLISH SCHOOLS IN JALPAIGURI
DISTRICT : 1947

Name	Year of establishment	Type	Remarks
Falakata Middle English School	1888	Boys'	
Maynaguri -do-	1895	„	A Middle Vernacular school existed here since 1889.
Jorpakri -do-	1919	„	A Middle Vernacular school existed here since 1892.
Mondalghat -do-	1919	„	
Sikarpur (Bhelakoba) -do-	1920	„	An M. V. School existed here since 1889.
Bakali -do-	1920	„	An M. V. School existed here since 1889.
Dhupguri -do-	1921	„	
Ananda Model -do-	1922	„	
Majidkhana -do-	1922	„	
Salkumar Hat -do-	1929	„	
Chengmari -do-	1931	„	Abolished in 1951
Mahakalguri Mission -do-	1931	Co-educational	
Kumargramduar -do-	1934	Boys'	
Alipur Duār Girls' -do-	1938	Girls'	
Kadamtala Girls' -do-	1939	„	
Manikganj Middle English School	1940	Boys'	Previously located in Brahmanpara as an M. V. School.
Gadra Middle English School	1940	„	Previously located in Jamadarpara.
Alipur Duār McWilliam Middle English School	1941	Co-educational	

Name		Year of establishment	Type	Remarks
Bhatibari Middle English School		1942	Boys'	
Rajadanga P.M. Jalpeś	-do-	1943	„	
Lakshmikanta Bonapara	-do-	1944	„	
Joydhardanga	-do-	1945	„	Previously located in Joydhardanga (in Bangladesh)
Chura Bhandar Bhel Bhela	-do-	1947	„	

In 1957-58, the number of such schools went up to 56. The enrolment of boys and girls in such schools was respectively 2,792 and 954 in 1957-58 and 3,586 and 1,988 in 1963-64. The number of students further increased to 5,241 boys and 4,120 girls on 1 August 1971. The Junior Basic Schools had 16,358 boys and 7,645 girls on its roll on 1 August 1971.

Primary
education

In the last decade of the 19th century some of the schools were aided by the District Board. According to the Panchayati Union scheme framed during the first decade of this century, a primary school named 'Model Primary School' was established in each Panchayati Union. Government then used to make a grant of Rs. 1,000 for the construction of the building and other allied expenses, and each boy used to get a monthly stipend of Rs. 10 or Rs. 11, while each girl received Rs. 16. As these schools were looked after by the District Board, they were called 'Board Schools'. Government also ordered in 22 March 1916 that schools should be constructed for the wards of workers in tea-gardens. At first, such schools were under Government control, but later they were made over to the tea-garden authorities. In 1934, such schools numbered 106 with a roll strength of 1,875 in the district. There were about 350 Primary Schools in the district in 1921.¹ There were 1,075 Primary Schools in the undivided district of Jalpāiguri in 1927-32, of which 1 was a Government school, 231 were managed by the District Board,

¹ A. K. Pakrashi, 'Jalpāiguri Jelāy Śikshāvistārer Rup-rekhā', in *Jalpāiguri Jelā Śatavārshiki Smārak Grantha : 1868-1968* (in Bengali), ed. C. C. Sanyal and others, Jalpāiguri, 1377 B.S. p. 184.

2 were managed by the Municipality and 841 were private Primary Schools (including 123 non-aided ones).

Primary Schools under the Bengal (village) Primary Education Act of 1930 came to be established in 1936 in the district. The District Board started free tuition facilities in the schools from 1933-34.

The quota of primary schools after Independence was fixed at 604. Just at the time of Independence the number was 588 and all the schools were co-educational. There was also a primary school for girls at Domohani managed by the Railways. The total number of primary students was 31,937 of whom boys numbered 25,907 and girls 6,030. In 1960-62, the percentage of school-going children of 6-14 years of age was 31.93.¹

The following table shows the number of an enrolment in the Primary (including Junior Basic) schools in the district during 1963-64.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1963-64

Govern- ment		District Board	Municipal Board	Pri- vates aided	Total	Students		
Central	State					Boys	Girls	Total
6	27	1,021	5	27	1,086	70,033	34,847	1,04,880

The number of schools and of students have considerably increased during the two decades beginning with 1947. In 1950-51, there were 704 Primary Schools attended by 48,640 pupils, the number increased to 1,386 institutions with 97,961 in 1971. In 1963-64, the number of Primary and Junior High school teachers taken together numbered 2,872 males and 573 females.

There are two pre-primary schools² in Jalpāiguri town named Sisuniketan and Sisumahal managed by private agencies. The former was established on 6 January 1941. It was enlarged through the munificence of Government and the tea industry sometimes in 1950 and located on a piece of land measuring about three bighas and a half. There are two nurseries, one kindergarten and one Junior Basic section attached to it. It has also a park and a clinic for children who are admitted to the

Pre-primary
education

¹ Government of West Bengal, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, *Backwardness of the Districts of West Bengal*, Calcutta, 1971, p. 30.

² The official records say that there are 6 pre-primary institutions in the district. The accounts of Sisuniketan and Sisumahal are taken from S. B. Chanda, 'Jalpāiguri Jelār Ekso Bachhare Strisikshār Kramavikās, in *Jalpāiguri Jelā Satavārshiki Smārah Grantha*, ed. C. C. Sanyal and others, Jalpāiguri, 1970, p. 154-55.

institution at the age of three. It had 250 students in 1958, and in 1968 the figure nearly doubled.

Sisumahal came into being on 3 January 1944 and had 200 students in 1968.

Ananda Marg has also set up a kindergarten school here where the mediums of instruction are English and Hindi.

Literacy

The Census of 1971 records 242 persons as literates per 1,000 of the district population as against 330 persons per 1,000 in the State. The said Census records 4,24,292 (3,00,398 males and 1,23,894 females) persons as literates in the district. That literacy is progressing both among the males and females of the district can well be seen from the following table.

PERCENTAGE OF LITERATES IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1901-71

Year	Persons	Males	Females
1901	3.92	6.98	0.36
1911	5.57	9.89	0.44
1921	5.67	9.92	0.72
1931	4.79	7.92	1.08
1941	8.77	14.15	2.41
1951	12.40	18.00	5.61
1961	19.22	27.07	10.01
1971	24.22	32.38	15.03

The following table further records the percentage of literates according to qualification in the rural and urban areas of the district a decade back.

PERCENTAGE OF LITERATES BY QUALIFICATION IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1961

	Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Illiterate	75.97	92.88	44.14	59.22
Literate (without educational level)	14.93	4.21	21.07	18.61
Primary or Junior Basic	7.19	2.66	22.20	19.32
Matriculation and above	1.91	0.25	6.08	1.42
University degree and other technical course	—	—	6.51	1.43
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

The Census of 1961 had recorded 10,98,091 persons as illiterates, 1,47,910 persons as literates without any educational level and 1,13,291 persons as having some education. The last class formed 8.33 per cent of the population. The following table classifies the literate persons of the district according to the Census of 1961.

LITERATE PERSONS IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1961

Education	Persons	Male	Female
Primary or Junior Basic	88,827	63,214	25,613
Matriculation or Higher			
Secondary	19,137	16,926	2,211
Technical Diploma	676	667	9
Non-technical Diploma	2,250	1,829	421
University Degree :			
General	1,745	1,472	273
Engineering	111	111	—
Medicine	174	173	1
Agriculture	27	27	—
Veterinary	11	11	—
Technology	38	38	—
Teaching	207	141	66
Others	88	88	—
Total	1,13,291	84,697	28,594

The students in the forties mostly used to attend colleges at Koch Bihar, Rangpur or Rajshahi as there was no college in the district headquarters. A son of the late Ananda Chandra Raut of Jalpāiguri made a gift of 4 bighas of land and Rs. 25,000 in cash for a college in memory of his late father. The college named Ananda Chandra College started functioning from 1942 with a roll strength of 91 which figure rose to 211 next year and to 582 in 1947. B.A. classes were opened in 1948.

Collegiate
education

With the munificence of Asrumati Devi, wife of Raja Prasannadeva, the Prasannadeva Girls' College came into existence in 1950.

With a gift of 50 bighas of land from the local people, the Alipur Duār College came into existence in 1957. The number

of students in different streams of the colleges as on 30 September 1971 is set forth in the following table.

GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED COLLEGES WITH ENROLMENT IN
JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1971

	Pre-university							
	Arts		Science		B.A.		B.Sc.	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Alipur Duār College,								
Alipur Duār	179	107	62	6	89	60	96	9
Ananda Chandra College,								
Jalpāiguri	159	16	50	1	230	14	163	15
Prasannadeva Women's College,								
Jalpāiguri	—	—	—	—	—	181	—	7

A Commerce College named Ananda Chandra College of Commerce has recently been opened in Jalpāiguri which had 422 boy and 19 girl students on 30 September 1971.

The Colleges are affiliated to North Bengal University. There was a Normal School in Jalpāiguri before 1878 where teachers were given training for teaching in Primary Schools. Later, this school was transferred to Rangpur (now in Bangladesh). Two Old Type Guru Training Schools were established later—one at Pachagarh (now in Bangladesh) in the Sadar Subdivision in 1900 and the other at Bhatibari in Alipur Duārs Subdivision in 1904. A Reformed Type Guru Training School came into being in Jalpāiguri in 1914. This school has been converted into a Junior Basic Training College in 1950. There is also another such college named Bhelakoba Junior Basic Training College at Prasannanagore, Jalpāiguri.

The Ananda Chandra Training College imparts training for B.T. examinations.

There were two weaving schools, possibly established in 1930, in the district—one located at Samuktala in the Alipur Duārs Subdivision, and the other at Mandalghat in the Sadar Subdivision. Later, these schools became peripatetic ones. Incidentally, the number of scholars in technical training and craftsmanship schools per million of population in 1961-62 was 446.¹

¹ Government of West Bengal, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, *Backwardness of the District of West Bengal*, Calcutta, 1971, p. 30.

The Jalpāiguri Polytechnic Institute established on 15 August 1950 had 35 boys on its roll as on 30 September 1971. In 1970, it had 90, 120 and 30 seats for Licentiate in Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Electrical Engineering respectively. It also teaches draughtsmanship. The Institute has two hostels and 33 teachers. In 1971-72, 41 students were admitted to it of whom 35 passed. In 1972-73, 81 students were admitted, of whom 23 passed.

Jackson Medical School with roll strength for 40 students was established in Jalpāiguri in 1930. It was managed by Government, the Civil Surgeon of the district being its Principal. Hundreds of students became L.M.P. from this school, and in later life they became physicians in the Duārs and the Terai area and also served under numerous local bodies. The school has been closed down since 1950 and has been converted into a Pharmacy Training Centre attached to the Sadar hospital, Jalpāiguri.

Medical School

Pharmacy Training Centre

The Jalpāiguri Engineering College, a Government-aided institution functioning from 1961, had 401 students in 1963-64. This institution had 603 boys on its roll as on 30 September 1971.

Engineering College

Formerly, training in nursing and midwifery was given in the local Ramakrishna Asram. Now such training is given in the Nurses' Training Centre attached to the Sadar hospital, Jalpāiguri. It had 45 trainee-girls in 1958. As on 30th September 1971 there were 91 trainee-girls and 4 trainee-boys there.

Nurses' Training

Large sums are being spent by Government for the education of the backward classes. In 1965, there were 2,586 Scheduled Tribes and 6,435 Scheduled Castes students in the secondary schools of the district, forming respectively 12.03 per cent of the total Scheduled Tribes students and 5.28 per cent of the total Scheduled Castes students of the State. The figure thus show greater spread of education among the Scheduled Tribes than among the Scheduled Castes. In 1965, the percentage distribution of the Scheduled Tribe secondary-stage students (communitywise) among the total secondary-stage students of the district was as follows: Kora 0.04, Malpaharia 0.73, Lodha 3.33, Munda 9.24, Oraon 56.06, Santal 6.23, Bhutia 0.77, Garo 0.54, Lepcha 0.04, Mahali 2.09, Mech 19.58, Nagesia 0.04, Rabha 0.46, Bedia 0.04, Chik Baraik 0.04, Kisan 0.19, Savar 0.04, Bhumij 0.08, Asur 0.04.

Education of the Backward Classes

The percentage distribution of some selected Scheduled Caste secondary-stage students (communitywise) among the total second-

dary-stage students of the district was as follows in 1965: Muchi 2.10, Rajwar 1.10, Rajbansi 78.02.

A review made by the Cultural Research Institute of the State Government in 1965 brought to light some facts about stagnation in the secondary-stage of education. The following table sets forth the results of their findings.¹

PERCENTAGE OF STAGNATION (FAILURES) IN
JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1965

Classes	Scheduled Castes			Scheduled Tribes			Other Communities		
	1963	1964	1965	1963	1964	1965	1963	1964	1965
V	32.01	36.74	24.00	29.76	33.77	28.72	27.33	28.27	28.31
VI	28.69	25.75	30.30	37.50	30.83	28.87	28.25	32.72	26.75
VII	29.86	34.33	30.21	38.50	30.33	27.34	29.24	29.31	30.75
VIII	41.55	34.77	37.23	39.49	30.46	31.78	36.39	32.70	32.55
IX*	56.41	56.25	28.81	33.33	36.00	48.39	26.13	32.06	30.15
X*	48.84	47.06	39.02	36.36	70.00	12.50	27.19	24.57	29.42
XI+	43.31	48.04	56.77	35.54	36.97	30.17	43.05	39.55	43.55
School leaving examination	65.66	64.88	55.56	36.36	59.26	35.71	43.73	44.82	45.89

Sanskrit
education

There are several *tols* in the district, namely, Maynaguri Anandanagar *tol*, Domohani *tol*, Jalpāiguri Sarasvat *Chatuspathi*, Sonapur Hridaynath *Chatuspathi* and Dvarikanath *Chatuspathi*, Alipur Duār. These five *tols*, had 41 boys and 23 girls on their rolls on 1 August 1971.

Adult
Education

Adult education stands for promotion of literacy and social education among adults, providing facilities for post-literacy education and development of library service, and promotion of community activities. In 1958, there were 21 Adult education centres for males and 3 for females having 1,842 male and 118 female students respectively in the district.

¹ A. K. Das and B. K. Roychowdhuri—'Nature and Extent of Progress of Secondary Education among the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes of West Bengal' in *Bulletin of the Cultural Research Institute*. Government of West Bengal, Vol. II, Nos. 1-2.

*In Higher Secondary stages.

+In School Final stage.

Since 1955, the Social Welfare Board has been imparting education among aged women and children in the villages of the district. The *Gram Sevikas* take active part in the programme. In 1955, there were only 5 such centres, which figure rose to 10 in 1960. These centres enliven poor children through games and offer them food as an incentive. Old women are also given education through story-telling, songs, etc.

Social
Welfare

The scheme for Social Education in the State started in 1948-49 but the work in this district started later. A Circle Assistant (Social Education) under the control of the District Inspector of Schools was appointed towards the latter part of 1949 who organised Social Education Centres for adult. In these government sponsored Adult Education Centres and aided Night Schools instructions in the three R's and in the fundamentals of health, citizenship, etc. were imparted. In 1956, a District Social Education Officer joined his post.

Social
Education

Steps are taken to establish Literacy Centres, Night Schools, etc. There are Complete Centres, with two teachers, one for imparting training in social education and another for literacy. There are also Literacy Centres staffed with one literacy teacher. Steps have also been taken to guard against relapse of illiteracy by follow-up education for neoliterates.

During the year 1973-74 there were 35 Night Schools, 24 Literacy Centres, 30 Complete Social Education Centres, 37 Social-cum-Community Centres and 70 One-teacher *pathshalas*. The entire scheme has of late been substituted by 30 Pilot Project Schemes functioning from 1974. According to the scheme, new Adult Education Centres will be established in place of the existing centres. Some villages in every development block will be selected for opening the new centres. Each centre will cover the entire village or area in about two years' time. The centre will then be shifted to a new village or area.

The District Library Association started functioning through an *ad hoc* committee on and from 16 December 1954. The foundation stone of the building of the Association was laid towards the beginning of 1956 on a piece of *Khasmahal* land. The District Library was constructed at a cost of about Rs. 1,25,000 during the Second Five Year Plan and was formally opened on 28 September 1958. At present (1974), it has 473 members and a stock of about 18,000 books. The library receives 47 periodicals on different subjects. This is a government sponsored institution and is looked after by a committee

District Library
Association

of twenty-nine members of the District Library Association headed by the Deputy Commissioner as Chairman and the District Social Education Officer as Secretary. The Association supplies books to member libraries through a mobile van every month. Apart from the public libraries, the libraries attached to educational institutions and clubs can also become member libraries. The Association started with 7 member libraries which figure rose to 52 in 1961 and 54 in 1974.

Sponsored Rural
Libraries

In 1961, there were 12 government sponsored rural libraries which received a non-recurring grant of Rs. 4,000 each and a recurring grant of Rs. 165 per month. The Alipur Duār Edward Library, situated in the subdivisional town of Alipur Duār, was the biggest rural library and was advanced a lump grant of Rs. 30,000 in 1961 for its development. At present (1974) there are 32 rural libraries, a list of which is given in Appendix A.¹

The District Library Association distributes lump grants to deserving public libraries managed by voluntary workers. It also runs Library Centres attached to Social Education Centres which are meant for neoliterates.

Physical Educa-
tion and Youth
Welfare

A District Youth Welfare Council was set up in the district in 1939 with the Deputy Commissioner as the President (*ex officio*) and the District Organizer of Physical Education as Secretary (*ex officio*). Under the development scheme for the improvement of physical education and youth welfare during the Second Five-year plan, the post of a District Officer for Physical Education and Youth Welfare was created and the first incumbent post in 1957. In 1961, there were 50 Youth Clubs and Associations in the district, excluding the clubs attached to the tea gardens of which 25 were recognized by the Council in 1961. The recognized clubs get financial assistance from Government.

District Sports
Association

The District Sports Association, established in 1956, organizes competitions in different games and sports amongst the clubs affiliated to it and hold coaching camps for the training of young athletes. In 1961, there were 29 clubs affiliated to the Association, which in its turn is affiliated to the State Association. It also takes part in inter-district competitions in sports and games.

Subdivisional
Sports
Association

There is a Subdivisional Sports Association at Alipur Duār which is affiliated to the District Association. It organizes athletic sports in the Alipur Duār subdivision.

¹ Source: Librarian, District Library, Jalpāiguri.

School sports are organized by Jogesh Chandra Memorial Indian Schools Sports Association, formed in 1935 for the district. Almost all the high schools are affiliated to it and competitions are organized under a zonal basis.

Indian Schools
Sports
Association

There is a District Association for Bharat Scouts and Guides. A whole-time District Organizer, paid by the Tea Board, looks after its activities. Several schools are affiliated to the Association.

Bharat Scouts
and Guides
Association

There are provisions for senior division NCC, junior division NCC and Auxiliary Cadet Corps in the colleges and several schools.

National Cadet
and Auxiliary
Cadet Corps

There are three Youth hostels, two at Buxa-Duar and one at Nilpara (Hashimara). They are primarily meant for teachers and students of recognized institutions and for bonafide members of youth clubs.

Youth Hostels

There is a children's park in Jalpāiguri town managed by the Jalpāiguri Young Men's Association.

Children's
Park

The Jalpāiguri Town Club was founded in 1898, its play-ground comprising an area of 3.09 acres being donated out of *khasmahal* land by the State Public Works Department. It takes part in the sports and games of the district. Some of the old clubs in the district town are Victoria club, Raikatpara club, Ukilpara club, Star club, Diamond jubilee club, etc. In 1901, a club named Union club was also founded for physical exercises. Another institution for physical culture named Adarsa Byayamagar was established in 1952 at Jalpāiguri town.

Clubs

A stadium having capacity for 1,400 onlookers was set up in 1957 on 0.99 acres of land donated by the State Government. It was inaugurated in 15 April 1961.

Stadium

There are a few cultural societies in the district town of which Arya Natya Samaj and Bandhab Natya Samaj are connected with dramatic performances.

Learned
Societies

Educational facilities in the tea gardens were meagre in the beginning probably because plantation labour was appointed on a three year contract basis.¹ The Plantation Labour Act, 1951 made provision for educational facilities for the children of the labourers and some primary schools were opened in the tea gardens. The schools were managed by the District School Board and are now being looked after by the District Inspector of Schools for primary education.

Education in
Tea Gardens

¹ C. C. Sanyal and others (ed.), *op cit.*, p. 318.

The Christian Missionaries have contributed to the spread of education in the district. The Roman Catholics started the St. Capitanic school for girls in Nagrakata in 1948, which became a Junior High School in 1958 and a High School in 1963. In 1968, there were 302 girls on its roll. A co-educational school named Nangdala Missionary High School has been founded in Birpara. The American Missionaries have opened the Raymand Missionary Training School in Falakata in 1949. The Catholic Diocese Society have opened a residential institution named Nirmala convent for girls in Damanpur within Alipur Duār police station in 1958. It became a Junior High School in 1960 and a High school in 1965. The Santal Mission School came into being in 1964. There are a few other missionary schools for girls located in the Denguajhar tea estate, Malbazar and Nagrakata, one of them being the St. Mary's Boarding.



APPENDIX A

RURAL LIBRARIES OF JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1974

Name	Address
1. Sailendra Smriti Pathagar, Saktigarh	P.O. Siliguri
2. Fulbari Pathagar O Club	P.O. Fulbari Hat
3. Ambari Falakata Public Library	P.O. Kamarvita
4. Bidhan Pathagar, Lalitabari	P.O. Saraswatipur
5. Bhelakoba Public Library	P.O. Prasannanagar
6. Sree Sangha Pathagar	P.O. Rajganj
7. Miloni Pathagar O Club	P.O. Chaulhati
8. Aurobinda Anchal Pathagar	P.O. Collegepara
9. Palli Sangha, Sovabari	P.O. Dhapganj
10. Swaraj Pathagar	P.O. Debnagar
11. Radhika Library	P.O. Maynaguri
12. Jalpeś Mohikanta Pathagar	P.O. Jalpeś
13. Nigamananda Pathagar	P.O. Dharampur
14. Saptibari Janaklyan Pathagar	P.O. Saptibari
15. Milani Pathagar	P.O. Dhupguri
16. Milan Sangha Library	P.O. Nathoahat
17. Netaji Pathagar	P.O. Lataguri
18. Chalsa Salbani Sangha Granthagar	P.O. Chalsa
19. Matiali Public Library	P.O. Matiali
20. Odlabari J. N. Chakrabarty Public Library	P.O. Manabari
21. Mal Pragati Sangha	P.O. Mal
22. Jateswar Milan Pathagar	P.O. Jateswar
23. Subhas Pathagar	P.O. Falakata
24. Debendra Pathagar	P.O. Rangalibajna
25. Edward VII Memorial Library	P.O. Alipur Duār
26. Tarun Pathagar, Chaparerpar	P.O. Chaparerpar
27. Ramkrishna Granthagar	P.O. Bhatibari
28. Kamakshyaguri Town Club Library	P.O. Kamakshyaguri
29. Sonapur Club-cum-Library	P.O. Pachkalguri
30. Kumargram Friends' Union Library	P.O. Kumargramduar
31. Azad Hind Pathagar	P.O. Jalpāiguri
32. Abhijan Sangha Library	P.O. Boalmari

CHAPTER XVI

MEDICAL & PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

SURVEY OF PUBLIC
HEALTH & MEDICAL
FACILITIES IN
EARLY TIMES

The earliest reference to diseases in the area is perhaps to be found in the *Itineraire* of Hooker. Hooker, in course of his travel through Jeelpigoree and its environs between the 3rd and the 14th March 1849 laments thus : 'More beautiful sites for fine mansions could not well be, and it is difficult to suppose so lovely a country should be so malarious as it is before and after the rains, excessive best probably diffusing widely the miasma from small stagnant surfaces.'¹

Hunter found that the principal endemic diseases of the district were malarious fevers, both remittent and intermittent, with all their complications. These fevers were attributed to malaria generated by the decomposition of the rank vegetation which abounded throughout the district. They were most prevalent about the beginning and end of the rains, that is, in the months of March and April and September and October. The remittent fevers of the *tarai* were severe and exhausting. The local inhabitants called the Mechs were seasoned to the disease, while the Europeans and people of other places coming to this area had attacks very often.² Splenetic affections, enlargement of the liver, anaemia and anar sarca (a kind of dropsy), all of malarious origin, were common throughout the district, though not to such an extent as in southern Bengal. Among bowel-complaints, diarrhoea and dysentery were the most common. The latter prevailed extensively at the beginning of the cold weather, and seemed to depend mainly on the damp and changeable nature of the climate, and also to some extent on bad food.³ The Medical Officer of Buxa reported in 1870 that scurvy was rampant among the native infantry stationed there. That was due to the want of vegetables. Goitre was also common, specially in the hilly areas of the Duars. Cases of elephantiasis of the leg and the scrotum were occasionally found. Rheumatism was there in the cold weather, though it had been said to be associated with venereal complaints as well. The

¹ J. D. Hooker — *Himalayan Journals*, London, 1854, p. 281.

² W. W. Hunter — *Statistical Accounts of Bengal*, Vol. X, London, 1876, p. 321.

³ *ibid.*, p. 322.

inhabitants were in the habit of surrounding their villages with a continuous bamboo hedge in the belief that it contributed to healthiness, and much of the disease originated from there.

Cholera occasionally appeared in an epidemic form. It prevailed throughout the area in 1865, specially among a gang of prisoners from the Rangpur jail who were engaged in building barracks for troops at Jalpeś. In April 1869, cholera broke out in the eastern and western parts of the district. The disease spread northwards from the State of Koch Behar, which it had previously ravaged; and also from Rangpur and Purnea districts, where it was virulent. It advanced into the Duars, attacking all sexes, ages, and castes alike, and sparing few whom it attacked. In many places people left their houses and fled away. The disease followed the main line of road appearing at Titalia and Siliguri. It also occurred in the south of Jalpāiguri town. Sporadic cases were also there in the northern tracts. It subsided with the coming of the rains in May.

Another attack occurred in 1872, and lasted from April to November. The figures of mortality in the jail showed, that out of a daily average of 61.26 prisoners, 20 deaths from cholera occurred within thirty-five days.¹

Milligan quotes Backett who wrote thus in 1872: "After the month of March the Duars are very unhealthy, but we had to stay out much longer than that."²

In 1885-86, mortality owing to fever was 23.71 per mille (i.e. thousand) and in 1886-87, it was 31.01 per mille, being the worst in Bengal.³

Milligan also quotes Colonel Boileau, who in 1888 wrote, "The known unhealthiness of the country cannot be ignored. Experience of five years of tea land survey establishment has shown that a large proportion of the men employed fall ill during both the early and the latter part of the field season and

¹ *ibid.*, p. 323.

² J. A. Milligan — *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Jalpaiguri District, 1906-16*, Calcutta, 1919, p. 16.

³ Report on the Administration of Bengal : 1885-87.

about two *amins* in ten die every year or leave the country unfit for any more hard work.¹ The predominant feature of malaria was that it was most deadly even when it occurred in places with high malaria endemicity. The annual administration report of 1891-92 pointed out that deficient rainfall was the cause of fever that year. It says that during heavy rainfall, for want of proper drainage water stagnates and becomes the source of malaria, and that during drought drinking water runs short and the vegetation and tanks begin to decompose, thus giving rise to malaria. The mortality rate from fever in 1893-94 was 28.11 per mille and in 1895-96 the total number of deaths was 22,191 caused by the blanket term 'fever'. Milligan narrates that one of his first experiences on arriving in Jalpāiguri was to see a planter's funeral, and that experience was repeated at short intervals during the fall of the dreadful year of 1906.² Matters came to a head that year and one 'Mr. Collings Wallich, an indefatigable enthusiast', took vigorous action. The whole European community rose up to the occasion and realized that money should be spent on sanitation and prophylaxis. In the following year, Capt. Christophers and Dr. Bentley came to the Duars to investigate malaria and black water fever and pursued investigations till 1909. As a result of all this health conditions improved in the tea gardens and improved sanitation was perceptible throughout the district.³ The Duars Labour Act, 1912 also provided for inspection by Government officers of the tea gardens in the matter of sanitation and collection of vital statistics.

Milligan says that for the period 1906-16 sanitation was a big problem in the district including the Western Duars. He expected that much could be done for the benefit of health when co-operation from school teachers would be available and the basic principles of hygiene taught to the students. The most important diseases then were malaria and other fevers, cholera, small-pox and enteric in humane and rabies and rinderpest in animals.⁴ Epidemic cholera was an annual scourge at that time, but Milligan hoped that its virulence would subside with the improvement in water supply. He says: 'Of recent years it has apparently entered the district on the extreme east and thence

¹ *ibid.*, p. 15-16.

² *loc. cit.* He, a Settlement Officer, and his team of workers were chronic malaria patients between 1907 and 1914.

³ *loc. cit.*

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 15.

spread westwards. The year 1914 was a particularly bad season.¹ Small-pox was also being reduced at that time because of vaccination, though a virulent outbreak of small-pox was reported in 1922 when the disease caused over 5 per cent of the total mortality.² The scourge continued and during 1923-24, 0.6 persons per 1,000 died of it.³

In 1924-25, the highest death-rate from cholera (2.5 per 1,000) was reported from this district.

As to medical institutions for preventive and curative measures, there were three charitable dispensaries in the then district, of which one (established in 1866) was in the present Jalpāiguri district and at Jalpāiguri town. According to Hunter, the high death-rate among indoor patients was due to the fact that the people were averse to accepting medical relief unless very seriously ill⁴, but by and by the number of outdoor patients began to increase, specially at the Jalpāiguri dispensary. The three dispensaries of the then district treated 1,759 patients, in 1869.⁵

A scheme for educating native women in practical midwifery was also tried at the Jalpāiguri dispensary in 1870-71 after consultation with the Divisional Commissioner.⁶ The following table indicates the number of patients treated in the Jalpāiguri dispensary in 1872.⁷

PATIENTS TREATED IN THE JALPĀIGURI DISPENSARY : 1872

Total No. treated	INDOOR					OUTDOOR		
	Cured or relieved	Not improved or who ceased to attend	Died	Remaining at hospital at the end of the year	Percentage of deaths to treated	Daily average No. of sick	Total treated	Average daily attendance
166	177	6	34	9	20.48	7.91	4,793	32.86

¹ *ibid.*, p. 17.

² *Annual Administration Report : 1922-23.*

³ *Annual Administration Report : 1923-24.*

⁴ W. W. Hunter — *op. cit.* p. 323.

⁵ *Report on the Administration of Bengal : 1869-70.*

⁶ *Report on the Administration of Bengal : 1870-71.*

⁷ W. W. Hunter — *op. cit.* p. 323.

Sunder made some attempts for improving sanitation in 1894 by reserving several tanks for drinking purposes in Chengmari, South Maynaguri and Buxa *parganas*.¹ He also caused some Raniganj pipe-wells to be sunk, and such wells numbering ninety were also sunk by the Deputy Commissioner in different parts of the Duārs.²

The building of the Jalpāiguri hospital was completed in 1905 in place of the old hospital which was gloomy and unhealthy.³ In the ten years from 1895 to 1904, the average daily number of indoor patients was 9.12 and in 1905 (the year in which the new hospital was opened) the number rose to 10.60 followed by 17.83 in 1906 and 23.98 in 1907. The total number of indoor patients there in 1907 was 758 and of outdoor patients 9,215. The charitable dispensaries at Alipur Duār and Falakata treated 7,238 and 6,839 patients, both indoor and outdoor, respectively in 1907. Maynaguri and Kumargram had outdoor dispensaries which treated 5,325 and 3,033 patients respectively in 1907.⁴

Milligan opined in 1919⁵ that the chief need of district from the standpoint of public health was an increase in the number of qualified doctors and that they should supervise water supply, vaccination and anti-malaria activities. He also opined that the doctors must be adequately supplied with medicines and appliances to cope with disease in epidemic form.⁶ He noticed that the question of water supply was receiving the attention of Government, that in the tea gardens improvements in that respect had been made and that the District Board and other funds annually spent considerable sums on Raniganj pipe-wells for improvements of water supply. He, however, recommended the sinking of *pucca* wells for the whole district as Raniganj pipe-wells did not last long.⁷

Towards the end of 1916-17, a beginning was made with three out of four schemes designed by Dr. Bentley as experiments in

¹ D.H.E. Sunder — *Survey and Settlement of the Western Duars in the district of Jalpaiguri : 1889-95*. Calcutta, 1895, p. 90.

² *ibid.*, p. 91.

³ J. F. Gruning — *Eastern Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers : Jalpaiguri*, Allahabad, 1911 p. 56.

⁴ *loc. cit.*

⁵ J. A. Milligan — *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁶ *loc. cit.*

⁷ *loc. cit.*

anti-malarial operation. The basis of the experiment was a system of sub-soil drainage. This experiment was proposed to be made at the Meenglass Tea Estate in the submontane region. There the hill streams, breeding a dangerous species of anopheles, were proposed to be put underground. The water was expected to be carried off in sub-soil drains when the flow became sluggish, while the storm flow was allowed to pass over them in the usual stream channels.¹ The work came into operation during the rains of 1917. Additional grant was given that year for such experiments in other hill streams within the area of experiment. Sub-Assistant Surgeons were sent to Meenglass to watch the result of the scheme and supervise the free distribution of quinine and other drugs.² Anti-malarial activities continued during the following years and in 1921-22 the fever index was 7 per cent below the mean of the preceding four years. The spleen index among the permanently resident children in the treated area was 56.5 in 1921 compared with 75.5, the mean of the preceding four years. In 1928-29, experimental anti-malarial schemes continued. Other anti-malarial measures adopted in addition to the distribution of quinine and cinchona febrifuge through District Board dispensaries, kala-azar doctors and anti-malarial co-operative societies were usually the treatment of malaria patients and propaganda by lantern slides, clearing of jungles, disinfecting the stagnant water bodies and draining of small collections of water and stagnant drains.

As to other medical activities, kala-azar surveys were conducted in the district from time to time. Educational propaganda and publicity was also resorted to in 1930-31. That year the Publicity Bureau of the Bengal Public Health Department arranged the delivery of several lectures with or without the aid of lantern slides for health propaganda, and at their stimulation the District Board organized its own propaganda department under the District Health Officer.

The District Board had also introduced free vaccination in 1917-18 and salaried vaccinators under it took the place of licensed vaccinators in 1920-21. Low death-rate from cholera was reported in 1920-21 as a result of disinfection of wells.

¹ *Report on the Administration of Bengal : 1916-17.*

² *Report on the Administration of Bengal : 1917-18.*

It has been reported that in 1883-84 the largest proportion of municipal income was devoted to sanitation in this district. The Sanitary Board of Bengal met seven times in 1935 and considered projects for Jalpāiguri Water Supply Extension. The Chief Engineer reported in 1934 that the 'decentralised storage' system of distribution had proved a success in the Jalpāiguri and some other municipalities. It was introduced as a method of checking waste of water and it was proposed to introduce this system of distribution in all new schemes of water supply.

VITAL STATISTICS

The system of registration of mortality for some selected urban and rural areas was introduced under the Bengal Births and Deaths Registration Act (Act IV of 1873). The Act was then mainly administered through the local bodies. In this district, according to Hunter, the selected urban area 100 years ago was the Jalpāiguri town and certain outlying villages with a total population of 6,281.¹ In 1875, the number of deaths within this area was 157 or 24.99 per thousand. The selected rural area was *pargana* Maynaguri with a total population of 48,185, of whom 664 or 13.78 per thousand died in 1873.

With the taking over of the district health services by the government in January 1959 effort was made to collect health statistics in a better way. A development scheme was undertaken for the purpose.² The scheme included a central processing in Calcutta of vital statistics (including statistics from hospitals) and a uniform standard for collection of the same and for instituting investigations in selected areas.

The multiple categories of Registrars of vital statistics in the urban and rural areas include Chairman or Health Officers of the municipalities in respect of the urban areas, Sanitary Inspectors of rural Public Health Circles, Medical Officers of Rural Health Centres, Inspectors or Investigators of Ideal Registration and Model Health Units, Railway Station Masters and others. The Officers-in-Charge of Police Stations (except in the Dārjiling district) and the Anchal Pradhans have been relieved of the work from April 1970. The Ideal Registration and Model Health Units

¹ W. W. Hunter — *op. cit.* p. 323.

² J. Datta Gupta and P. C. Choudhury — *Census of India 1961 : Vol. XVI : West Bengal & Sikkim : Part 1—3 : Report on Vital Statistics. Delhi, 1967, p. 8.*

submit their returns to the State Bureau of Health Intelligence, West Bengal regularly. As regards Jalpāiguri it appears that in 1967 out of 105 reporting units of the district, 100 reported the vital events, that is, 1 municipality, 87 Anchals and 12 miscellaneous units reported the vital events out of 2 municipalities, 91 Anchals and 12 miscellaneous agencies respectively.

Although deficiency in man, material and money and lack of responsiveness of the people stood on the way of correct recording of deaths, attempts have been made to set the defect right by sample studies. Such studies are undertaken independently of normal registration to obtain correct results in both quantitative and qualitative aspects. Not only the absolute number of vital events, but also qualitative expressions of the events like the causes of deaths are taken into consideration. Such studies were taken up in the state in a phased manner since 1965. The programme is launched near the Primary Health Centres for operational ease. In this district two Primary Health Centres (Maynaguri and Falakata) were selected for intensive operations on a working ratio of 1—programme area (unit) to 1 million population. The scheme aims at finding out broad symptoms and conditions of the patient, by personnel enquiries from the family of the deceased, etc.¹

Model Registration (Deaths) :
in Primary Health
Centre Areas

Hospital data are also an important source for collection of health statistics. The hospitals send in-patient records, monthly returns of patients treated in the outdoor and annual administrative reports. The receipt position of these reports are not, however, always bright as will appear from the table below.

Hospital data

RECEIPT POSITION OF HOSPITAL RETURNS FOR JALPAIGURI DISTRICT 1967²

Total No. of medical institutions			No. of medical institutions which submitted returns		
Hospitals & Health Centres	Dispensaries	Clinics	Hospitals & Health Centres	Dispensaries	Clinics
40	14	23	32 (80.0)*	10 (71.4)*	1 (4.0)*

¹ Government of West Bengal, State Bureau of Health Intelligence Report on *Model Registration : Survey of Causes of Death Scheme, West Bengal, 1968-70*. Calcutta, pp. 1-5.

² Government of West Bengal, State Bureau of Health Intelligence — *Annual Report on Hospital Statistics ; West Bengal : 1957*, Calcutta, p. 2.

* Figures in brackets indicate percentage.

Sample
registration

The sampling technique has also been resorted to for want of a system of full coverage of vital registration. As per recommendation of the Conference on Improvement of Vital Statistics held in New Delhi in April 1961, the Registrar General, India, accepted *inter alia* the plan for a short-term scheme of sample registration of births and deaths to get dependable current data on birth and death-rates. The working group set up by the Planning Commission also approved it as one of the centrally-sponsored schemes during the third five-year plan with 75 per cent central assistance.¹ The scheme opened up with a pilot study in July 1966 to be followed by sample surveys in full scale from January 1968. The State was divided into two natural or geographical divisions namely, the Himalayan consisting of the three contiguous districts of Dārjiling, Jalpāiguri and Koch Bihar and the plains consisting of the remaining districts. The vital rates obtained under the scheme has been found to be fairly reasonable and accurate.

Half-yearly
census

Half-yearly censuses of births and deaths are also undertaken to improve the system of registration. The estimated mid-year population in 1967 in the district was as follows.²

	Urban	Rural	Total
Male	46,848	7,82,282	8,29,130
Female	38,113	6,78,140	7,16,253
Total	84,961	14,60,422	15,45,383

Under this scheme the local Registrars of Births and Deaths are to select a compact area having 1,000 population near their respective headquarters. Each house in the area should be visited twice a year—once in July and again in January to ascertain births and deaths occurring in each house of the selected area during the six months preceding the month of survey.

Deaths by
age-group

The following table shows the number of age-wise deaths in the district.

¹ Government of West Bengal, State Bureau of Health Intelligence -- *Annual Report on Hospital Statistics : West Bengal : 1967*, Calcutta, p. 2.

² Government of West Bengal, State Bureau of Health Intelligence -- *Annual Report on Vital Statistics, West Bengal, 1967*, Calcutta, p. ii.

DEATHS REGISTERED BY AGE-GROUP AND SEX IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1967¹

Age-group	Male			Persons		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Under 28 days	407	48	359	743	70	673
28 days—						
11 months	313	8	305	570	15	555
Under 1 year	720	56	664	1,313	85	1,228
1—14 years	1,128	64	1,064	2,181	106	2,075
15—44 years	1,092	160	932	2,582	257	2,325
45—64 years	1,316	126	1,190	2,204	175	2,029
65 years +	1,192	77	1,115	2,005	165	1,840
Age not stated	24	6	18	35	9	26
All ages	5,472	489	4,983	10,320	797	9,523

It will appear from the foregoing table that the largest number of deaths has been recorded in the 15—44 age-group, followed by the 45—64 age-group. Both these groups take a span of 19 years, but if age-groups upto 14 years are taken together, the deaths in childhood far surpass the deaths in the other two groups.

In this connexion we may consider the large number of infant deaths (i.e. under one year) in the district, specially in its rural areas as will appear from the table below.

Infant deaths

NO. OF INFANT DEATHS IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1967²

Urban		Rural		Total		
Male	Persons	Male	Persons	Male	Female	Persons
56	85	664	1,228	720	593	1,313
(54.1)*	(42.5)	(47.0)	(43.8)	(47.5)	(39.8)	(43.7)

The details of infant deaths upto one year of age is given in the table below.

¹ Government of West Bengal, State Bureau of Health Intelligence — *Annual Report on Vital Statistics, West Bengal, 1967*, p. XIV.

² *ibid.*, p. VI.

* The figures in brackets indicate the rates per 1,000 live births.

DEATHS OF INFANTS AGED BY DAYS IN JALPĀIGURI
DISTRICT : 1967¹

	Death-rate per 1,000 live births								
Within 24 hours	1-6 days	7-27 days	Under 4 weeks	4 weeks to under 3 months	3-5 months	6-11 months	Under 1 year	Under 4 weeks	Under 1 year
58	383	302	743	222	138	210	1,313	24.72	43.69

In the recent past the findings of births and deaths in the district were as below.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1951-60²

Population 1961	Population 1951	Variation in 10 yrs.	Live birth registered 1951-60	Total deaths registered 1951-60	Excess of births over deaths	Col. 3 minus col. 6	Col. 7 in percentage to col. 3
13,59,292	9,16,747	4,42,545	3,32,436	1,28,450	2,03,986	2,38,559	58.9

It will appear from the foregoing table that natural increase in population owing to excess of births over deaths during the decade was less than the difference between the population of 1951 and 1961 censuses. So, other causes might be responsible to the extent of 53.9 per cent of the increase. This figure may have been so owing to the combined effect of migration as also defect in registration of births and deaths during the period.

The following table shows the number of births registered by the sex in the district in 1967.

¹ *ibid.*, p. XLIX.

² J. Dutta Gupta and P. C. Choudhury — *Census of India 1961 : Vol. XVI : West Bengal & Sikkim : Part 1-3 : Report on Vital Statistics*. Delhi, 1967, p. 3.

NO. OF BIRTHS IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1967¹

Urban		Rural		Total		
Male	Persons	Male	Persons	Male	Female	Persons
1,035	1,999	14,121	28,052	15,156	14,895	30,051
(12.2)*	(23.5)	(9.7)	(19.2)	(9.8)	(9.6)	(19.4)

The following table further shows the number of deaths by sex in the district in 1967.

NO. OF DEATHS IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1967²

Urban		Rural		Total		
Male	Persons	Male	Persons	Male	Female	Persons
489	797	4,983	9,523	5,472	4,848	10,320
(10.4)*	(9.4)	(6.4)	(6.5)	(6.6)	(6.8)	(6.7)

A comparative study of the two foregoing tables would indicate that the death-rate is lower than the birth-rate as in other places.

The following table shows the situation of live and still births in the district vis-a-vis the State as obtaining in 1967. It will be seen that there is a fairly high still birth ratio in the State as in the district which calls for better pre-natal care.

Live and Still
Births

LIVE AND STILL BIRTHS IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1967³

	Live Births		Still Births		Still Birth ratio per 100 total births		
	urban	rural	urban	rural	urban	rural	total
West Bengal	1,30,201	4,13,027	3,103	3,508	2.33	0.84	1.20
Jalpaiguri	1,999	28,052	137	545	6.41	1.91	2.22

The list furnished in Appendix A shows the number of outdoor and indoor patients treated in the hospitals and the deaths thereof in the district. It will be seen that quite a large number of patients suffer from dysentery and other gastric

DISEASES COMMON
TO THE DISTRICT

¹ Government of West Bengal, State Bureau of Health Intelligence — *Annual Report on Vital Statistics : West Bengal : 1967*, p. IV.

² *ibid.*, p. V.

³ *ibid.*, p. 9.

* The figures in brackets indicate the rates per 1,000 population.

diseases, tuberculoses, anaemias, etc., though the largest number of deaths are seen to have been occasioned by anaemias. The list in Appendix B shows the number of deaths from some selected causes in the district during 1961 and 1966.

It is seen that the rural health of the District is poorer than the urban. The following table shows the number of deaths from some selected diseases in the rural and urban sectors of the district.

DEATHS IN THE RURAL AND URBAN AREAS WITH RATES PER
MILLE OF JALPÄIGURI DISTRICT : 1967

Name of Diseases	Death			Rate		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Ancamias	782	29	753	.51	.34	.52
Bronchitis	172	5	167	.11	.06	.11
Dysentery	554	20	534	.36	.24	.37
Gastritis	241	39	202	.16	.46	.14
Infective & Parasitic diseases	121	1	120	.08	.01	.08
Leprosy	30	—	30	.02	—	.02
Malignant neoplasms	90	27	63	.06	.32	.04
Measles	10	—	10	.01	—	.01
Metabolic & nutritional diseases	399	11	388	.26	.13	.27
Nervous system & sense organs — diseases of	65	17	48	.04	.20	.03
Pneumonia	985	16	969	.64	.19	.66
Small-pox	3	—	3	—	—	—
Snake bites & stings of venomous animals, etc.	41	3	38	.03	.04	.03
Typhoid	48	7	41	.03	.08	.03
T.B.—pulmonary	256	27	229	.32	.16	.08
Tetanus	84	12	72	.05	.14	.05

A list of public hospitals and dispensaries has been given in Appendix C. The list contains state hospitals, departmental hospitals, public health centres, etc. along with the number of beds in such institutions. The following table shows the urban and rural medical institutions in the district in 1950 and 1971.

PUBLIC HOSPITALS
AND DISPENSARIES

URBAN AND RURAL MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS IN JALPĀIGURI
DISTRICT : 1950-71

1950-71								Increase in beds during 1950-71 (%)	
1950				1971					
Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban			
No.	Beds	No.	Beds	No.	Beds	No.	Beds	Rural	Urban
30	19	6	289	57	218	18	626	1,047.3	116.6

The foregoing table shows that there has been a considerable increase in the number of rural medical institutions as compared to the urban ones over the 20-year period beginning from 1950. In 1971, there were 8 hospitals with 638 beds, 34 health centres with 206 beds, 21 clinics and 16 dispensaries. The following table shows the different kinds of hospitals functioning in the district.

HOSPITALS BY CATEGORIES OF INSTITUTIONS : 1971

District No.	District Beds	Sub-divisional No.	Sub-Divisional Beds	Private non-aided No.	Private non-aided Beds	State special* No.	State special* Beds	Railways No.	Railways Beds
1	301	1	68	2	112	3	86	1	71

There is a homoeopathic dispensary at the Theosophical Lodge at Jalpāiguri run by the Jalpāiguri municipality.

The Chief Medical Officer of Health is in charge of the medical and public health administration of the district. The functions of the Civil Surgeon were formerly restricted to the curative aspect of public health and its preventive aspect was entrusted under

MEDICAL
ADMINISTRATION

* Belonging to police, jail departments, etc.

Bengal Act III of 1885 to the district and local boards and later to the union boards formed under Bengal Act V of 1919. A District Health Officer whose charges were borne by the District Board and the provincial government, was then used to be appointed under the District Board to look after the preventive side of public health. On the recommendation of the Bhore Commission of 1946, both the curative and preventive sides of public health came under the control of the Chief Medical Officer of Health in 1958 replacing the former Civil Surgeon. The CMOH is now assisted by the District Medical Officer, who is also the superintendent of the district hospital, on the curative side and by the District Health Officer on the preventive side of public health. There are also district family planning officer, medical officer of school health, district tuberculosis officer, assistant district health officer (malaria), medical officers of primary and subsidiary health centres, subdivisional health officer and subdivisional medical officer under the control of the CMOH in the district.

The following table shows the number of medical staff in Jalpāiguri District.

MAN POWER (HEALTH) POSITION IN JALPĀIGURI
DISTRICT : 1971¹

Bed	Medical Officer Male	Medical Officer Female	Nurse	Public Health Nurse/Lady Health Visitor	Mid-wife	Trained Dai	Pharmacist/ Compounder	Radio-grapher	Laboratory Assistant Technician
539	54	1	170	6	29	3	44	5	11

PRIVATE HOSPITALS

The number of private hospitals and dispensaries, etc. appears in the list in the Appendix A. According to the Census of 1961 there were 525 (including 6 females) physicians, surgeons and dentists in the rural areas of the district. In the urban areas such persons numbered 607 (including 3 females). According to that census there were 540 (including 139 females) nurses, pharmacists and other medical and health technicians in the rural areas of the district. Such persons in the urban areas numbered 356 (including 146 females).

¹ Government of West Bengal, State Bureau of Health Intelligence — *Health on the March ; West Bengal : 1971*, p. 19.

The following table shows the distribution of general physicians, surgeons and dentists in different police stations of the district according to the Census of 1961.

NUMBER OF PHYSICIANS, ETC. IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1961

Police station	Rural		Urban	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Jalpāiguri	—	—	450	2
Rajganj	45	—	—	—
Maynaguri	95	—	29	1
Nagrakata	22	—	—	—
Dhupguri	52	—	22	—
Mal	27	—	14	—
Madarihat	39	—	—	—
Falakata	56	—	8	—
Kalchini	56	—	—	—
Alipur Duār	100	3	81	—
Kumargram	27	3	—	—

The Plantation Labour Act 1951, together with the West Bengal Plantation Labour Rules 1956, regulates the service conditions of Plantation Labour.¹ It prescribes that in every plantation, employing 1,000 workers or more employers should provide hospitals with a minimum of 15 beds and adequate medical staff. In the gardens where hospitals do not exist, dispensaries with a maximum number of 5 beds under the care of a qualified physician assisted by a fully trained nurse are required to be provided. If any employer does not provide and maintain medical facilities as required under the rules, he is required to pay full costs of such medical facilities by arrangement with any neighbouring hospital.

Medical facilities
in tea gardens

It has been ascertained that each tea garden under Dooars Branch of Indian Tea Association has its own hospital with both indoor and outdoor facilities.²

¹ Government of West Bengal — *Labour in West Bengal* : 1972, pp. 67-8. Source : Joint Secretary, Dooars Branch, Indian Tea Association, Binnaguri. Also cf. "In the interior of the district, apart from the Government hospitals and dispensaries, the tea gardens, both European and Indian, have between them as many as 153 dispensaries. There are two particularly good tea garden hospitals in the Western Duars, one attached to Kalabari Tea Estate about 4½ miles west of Banarhat, and another at Mathura Tea Estate about 7 miles from Silbarighat" *vide*, A. Mitra — *Census 1951 : West Bengal : District Handbooks : Jalpāiguri*, Calcutta, p. IXIII.

**PUBLIC HEALTH
WELFARE
ACTIVITIES**

School Health

School Health activities consist of examination of the health condition of the students in the areas having health centres. In 1972, such activities were carried out in 35 Rural Health Centres of the district, both Primary and Subsidiary. The programme was undertaken in 416 schools having 56,405 students. The schools visited numbered 282 and the students examined numbered 14,884 of whom 4,164 students had defective health, 3,130 having one defect and the rest more than one. There were 1,009 students suffering from skin diseases, 283 from chronic digestive disorder, 1,195 from diseases of teeth and gum, 514 from enlarged tonsils, 335 from defective nutrition among others suffering from other diseases. Cases of goitre were examined in Sulkapara, Ramsai, Churabhuder, Saptihari, Odlabari and Kumargram health centres, the largest number of goitres (117 and 244 respectively) being reported from the last two. The report for the year says that 532 guardians were present during health examination of the students at school, 1,881 guardians were notified for correction of defects of their wards, 2,663 defective students were kept under the surveillance of teachers for follow-up, 657 students were followed up by health staff at home. The defective students treated at the health centres numbered 7,828 (new) and 6,577 (old) — of whom 252 new cases and 11 old cases were referred to specialist treatment centres. Sanitary inspection was also held in 172 schools and the immunizations done numbered 420 for primary vaccination and 9,572 for re-vaccination. Other immunizations numbered 5,808 (TABC), 4,751 (anti-cholera) and 265 (TAB). The BCG unit also administered BCG inoculation to 34,152 students.

**Anti-tuberculosis
activities**

The Indian Red Cross Society, Jalpāiguri branch runs Rani Asrumati Hospital to which a T.B. clinic is attached. The T.B. beds in that clinic number 60 of which 20 beds are reserved by the Health and 10 by the Relief and Rehabilitation departments of the State Government. The rest of the beds are donated by the Tea Board and other endowments. The same institution runs another T.B. clinic at Maynaguri to which a domiciliary unit has been attached by the State Government. The District T.B. Centre is attached to the Sadar Hospital, Jalpāiguri and a chest clinic-cum-domiciliary unit is located in the Alipur Duār sub-divisional hospital. BCG vaccination was administered to 38,581 and 62,419 persons in 1971 and 1972 respectively.

Family Planning

The hospitals and health centres having family planning welfare centres attached to them have been shown in Appendix C.

It may be recalled that during the first two five-year plans, population control was based on a clinical approach to the problem. During the third plan a comprehensive campaign was undertaken which was integrated with maternity and child health programmes. In the fourth plan, the programme was intensified. The primary aim was that of reducing the annual birth rate. The operational goals were the adoption of family planning as a way of life through group acceptance of a small family norm, dissemination of knowledge of family planning methods and ready availability of supplies and services. The programme is now implemented through the State Governments as Centrally-sponsored schemes with full financial assistance. According to the 1971 Census, 90.2 per cent of the population is rural. Of total sterilisation done in 1970-71 and 1971-72, 50.2 and 86.4 per cent respectively were done in rural areas. The percentages of rural to total IUCD during the said years were respectively 78.2 and 64.7. In 1971-72, 197 tubectomy operations were successfully done in the Sadar Hospital of the district. The following table shows the progress of the sterilisation programme in the district since 1966-67.

STERILIZATION PROGRAMME IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1966-72

Year	Vasectomy	Tubectomy	Total	Target	Percent- age of target achieved
1966-67	532	252	784	1,000	78.4
1967-68	11,536	76	11,612	4,800	241.9
1968-69	9,463	81	9,544	9,960	95.8
1969-70	1,412	184	1,596	9,900	16.1
1970-71	1,787	235	2,022	10,600	19.1
1971-72	7,308	382	7,690	4,200	183.0

DISTRIBUTION OF CONVENTIONAL CONTRACEPTIVES IN
JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1968-73

Year	Condom	Jelly (units)	Foam tablet
1968-69	17,060	485	5,954
1969-70	55,692	1,319	5,140
1970-71	83,824	996	2,114
1971-72	76,071	1,154	1,942
1972-73	73,391	719	180

It will be seen from the above table that the conventional contraceptives are popular and are being used in good numbers.

The following table shows the progress of the Intra-uterine cervical device in recent years.

PROGRESS OF IUCD IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1965-72

Year	Target	Total	Percentage of target achieved
1965-66	4,723	9,944	210.5
1966-67	9,446	4,843	51.3
1967-68	5,512	1,678	30.4
1968-69	6,640	214	3.2
1969-70	1,400	185	13.2
1971-72	119	400	29.6

Anti-malaria activities

That malaria was a scourge of the district has been shown in the earlier part of this chapter. The National Malaria Control Programme was launched in 1953 and was changed into the National Malaria Eradication Programme in 1958. According to the earlier programme, three rounds of DDT spraying were continued in the district. Active surveillance of patients was undertaken from the year 1961 and was carried out by fortnightly house visits by the NMEP staff. Blood smears were collected from fever cases to detect malaria cases and to provide for radical treatment. An independent appraisal team set up by the Government of India assessed the progress of the programme in the district.

Surveillance operation through fortnightly house visits and treatment through medical relief institutions continue in the entire district. Besides, two rounds of insecticidal coverage to all roofed structure are also undertaken.

Anti-leprosy work

The incidence of leprosy is not very high in the district, the prevalence rate being 0.25 per cent to 0.5 per cent. There is a leprosy clinic in Jalpāiguri town run by Zilla Parishad. The State Government gives grants to the Parishad for the maintenance of the clinic.

A Pharmacy Training Centre has been established in Jalpāiguri town in 1949. It offers Diploma in Pharmacy after 2 years' academic and 3 months' practical training. Upto the end of 1973, 364 students passed out of it since its inception. The teaching staff numbers 14 in all. Fifty students are admitted in each session and the tuition fee charged per student is Rs. 5 per month. Fifteen per cent of the seats are reserved for Scheduled Caste students and five per cent for the Scheduled Tribes. There is provision for ten merit-cum-means scholarships Rs. 50 per month.

Pharmacy Training Centre,
Jalpāiguri

The District Health Officer under the control of the Chief Medical Officer of Health looks after public health preventive work in the rural areas. Formerly an officer of the District Board, the District Health Officer has become a State Government official since 1st January 1959 as from that day the public health activities have been taken over by Government. The District has 12 rural public health circles manned by 12 Sanitary Inspectors who in their turn are assisted by 85 Health Assistants and 47 Public Health nurses. Apart from preventive work through administration of inoculation, vaccination, etc. the DHO issues licenses for sale of food article and takes control measures under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 and the rules framed thereunder in 1955. The following table shows preventive work undertaken by the DHO in recent years.

SANITATION

VACCINATIONS, INOCULATIONS, ETC. DONE IN THE RURAL AREAS OF JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1968-72.

Year	Vaccination		AC	TABC	Persons immunized by Triple Antigen & Double Antigen
	Primary	Re-vaccination			
1968	44,189	2,05,593	70,573	1,30,055	—
1969	49,637	1,91,129	59,728	1,39,090	—
1970	56,858	1,76,312	69,648	1,43,072	23,557
1971	53,808	2,88,926	2,07,200	1,39,256	—
1972	97,213	2,81,461	68,802	8,682	—

Regarding issue of food licences the following table shows the collections made therefrom by the State on that account.

FOOD LICENCES ISSUED IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT : 1970-73

Year	New licences issued	Old licences renewed	Fees Collected (Rs.)
1970-71	1,833	4,930	13,167.50
1971-72	1,925	4,317	12,042.00
1972-73	1,956	5,369	12,206.00

The following table further shows how food adulteration is being prevented in rural areas.

ADMINISTRATION OF FOOD ADULTERATION ACT, 1954 IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1967-72

No. of Prosecutions

Year	No. of food samples taken	No. of food samples analysed	For food adulteration	For selling food without licence	No. of samples conforming to the standard	No. of found adulterations
1967	146	146	15	158	92	54
1968	155	136	32	48	85	51
1969	107	40	10	13	33	7
1970	64	8	39	14	2	6
1971	63	58	59	3	30	28
1972	125	125	82	45	86	39

The municipalities have their own complement of public health staff. The Jalpāiguri Municipality administered re-vaccination to 12,115 persons, primary vaccination to 824, TABC inoculation to 879, AC inoculation to 2,235 in 1972-73. It also disinfected 1,287 houses and 769 wells the same year.

The following table shows the measures taken for improvement of public health by the Alipur Duār Municipality in recent years.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIVITIES OF THE ALIPUR DUAR MUNICIPALITY : 1971-73

Year	No. of Primary vaccinations	No. of re-vaccinations	Inoculations		Triple Antigen	Disinfections	
			AC	TABC		Houses	Wells
1971-72	1,199	11,900	9,840	804	275	72	53
1972-73	1,136	17,277	4,397	5,153	493	153	115

Sanitation in the municipal areas is administered by the municipalities themselves. As to water supply the Jalpāguri Municipality had its water works completed in 1934. Two 5" diameter tube-wells were the sources of water supply at that time. The designed capacity of the works then was 1,12,000 gallons per day to serve 28,000 people. Now the Municipality maintains three deep electrically operated tube-wells whose daily output is 1,70,000 gallons for 36,000 people.

Water Supply

In Alipur Duār town the street tube-wells are the main source of supply of drinking water. The Alipur Duār Municipality sunk 10 tube-wells and re-sunk 36 during 1971-72. It sunk 6 tube-wells and re-sunk 36 during 1972-73. The total number of tube-wells upto March 1973 was 210. This Municipality has taken up a water supply scheme at a cost of Rs. 19,40,000, $\frac{2}{3}$ of which will be borne by the State Government and $\frac{1}{3}$ by the Municipality itself. They have sunk 4 tube-wells in two zones, mainly the old town and the new town areas. The Zilla Parishad have transferred to the municipality the site for the purpose of erection of head works, pumping house, staff quarters, etc. They have also started laying pipes and the work is being looked after by the Public Health Engineering department of the State Government.

The Jalpāguri Municipality have some schemes for shifting the compost ground to a place away from the inhabited area and for conversion of service privies into sanitary latrines. In Alipur Duār town it appears that for want of a treaching ground, the present private arrangement of dumping night-soil is causing great annoyance and effecting public health seriously.¹ The Municipality secured land for establishment of a trenching ground in 1964. The approach road to that ground has also been acquired and it is expected that the trenching ground would be utilised soon. The Alipur Duār Municipality like its counterpart at Jalpāguri arranged for cleaning of roads and drains.

Conservancy

The Alipur Duār Municipality did some work on drainage by protecting the damaged road at Aravinda Nagar, a part of the town, and by improving the drainage system of the area at a cost of Rs. 16,948 in 1972-73.

Drainage

¹ Alipur Duār Municipality — *Annual Administration Report for the year 1972-73*, p. 8.

RURAL WATER
SUPPLY

The Executive Engineer, North Bengal Division, Siliguri looks after both rural and urban water supply schemes and there is one Assistant Engineer at Jalpāiguri working under him. Drinking water is available from tube-wells or wells. In 1970-71, 123 tube-wells were sunk in the district and in 1971-72, 19 ring-wells and 60 tube-wells were sunk.

The average depth of water level for tube-wells in different police stations is given below:

AVERAGE DEPTH OF WATER LEVEL FOR TUBE-WELLS IN
JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT : 1974

Name of Polices Station	Average Depth of Water Level
1. Jalpāiguri (Kotwali P.S.)	13' — 0"
2. Rajganj (Part)	20' — 0"
3. Maynaguri (Part)	12' — 0"
4. Dhupguri (Part)	12' — 0"
5. Mal	N.A.
6. Nagrakata	N.A.
7. Matiali	N.A.
8. Alipur Duār	14' — 0"
9. Kalchini	15' — 0"
10. Falakata	12' — 0"
11. Kumargram	15' — 0"
12. Madarihāt	N.A.



From 1972-73 the rural water supply programme is being execute by the Deputy Commissioner through the Block Development Officers. The rural water supply agency has been maintaining 4 piped water supply schemes namely, Jateśwar Water Supply Scheme, Banarhat Water Supply Scheme, Lukshan Water Supply Scheme, Jalpāiguri Hospital Water Supply Scheme. It also maintains 32 water supply schemes in the primary and subsidiary health centres. Piped water supply schemes have also been taken up in Maynaguri and Kalchini.

In the tea plantation areas drinking water supply is mostly derived from deep tube-wells ; with attached pipe lines and from the *Jhoras* through pipe lines.

APPENDIX A

PATIENTS TREATED IN RECOGNISED HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CENTRES IN JALPAIGURI DISTRICT :- 1961-66

Name of Diseases		1961	1966
Total patients treated in West Bengal	Outdoor	1,00,72,599	1,27,53,391
	Indoor	1,00,745	1,18,414
	Deaths	16,408	22,127
Total patients treated in the District	Outdoor	3,10,313	4,19,609
	Indoor	2,548	2,890
	Deaths	403	460
Allergic Diseases	Outdoor	2,956	5,084
	Indoor	3	3
	Deaths	—	—
Anaemias	Outdoor	6,317	10,006
	Indoor	63	112
	Deaths	32	42
Cholera	Outdoor	78	56
	Indoor	—	2
	Deaths	—	2
Diabetes	Outdoor	30	111
	Indoor	2	5
	Deaths	—	1
Diphtheria	Outdoor	90	201
	Indoor	19	29
	Deaths	3	8
Diseases of Child-birth (Haemorrhage)	Outdoor	108	1,530
	Indoor	26	15
	Deaths	7	4
Dysentery (Amoebia)	Outdoor	14,580	37,544
	Indoor	53	13
	Deaths	1	1
Early Infancy Diseases (Infections)	Outdoor	9	18
	Indoor	2	—
	Deaths	1	—
Effects of Poison	Outdoor	68	103
	Indoor	25	34
	Deaths	2	3
Eye Diseases (Glaucoma)	Outdoor	117	232
	Indoor	2	4
	Deaths	—	—

Appendix A (*contd.*)

Name of Diseases		1961	1966
Pilaeiasie	Outdoor	87	193
	Indoor	4	—
	Deaths	—	—
Food Poisoning	Outdoor	70	992
	Indoor	1	7
	Deaths	—	—
Gastric Liaseas Diseases	Outdoor	5,908	5,570
	Indoor	19	7
	Deaths	2	—
Gonococcal Infection	Outdoor	136	124
	Indoor	1	—
	Deaths	—	—
Breast Diseases (Arteri- celerstic & degenera- tive heart diseases)	Outdoor	6	9
	Indoor	8	4
	Deaths	8	2
Infectious Hepatitis	Outdoor	33	344
	Indoor	2	28
	Deaths	—	4
Influenza	Outdoor	18,877	24,592
	Indoor	17	17
	Deaths	—	—
Kala-azar	Outdoor	5	13
	Indoor	3	—
	Deaths	—	—
Leprosy	Outdoor	232	142
	Indoor	1	—
	Deaths	—	—
Malaria	Outdoor	2,135	211
	Indoor	18	1
	Deaths	1	—
Measles	Outdoor	621	1,100
	Indoor	—	7
	Deaths	—	—
Psichoneuroses	Outdoor	13	28
	Indoor	6	4
	Deaths	—	—
Paratyphoid Fever	Outdoor	339	400
	Indoor	—	—
	Deaths	—	—

Appendix A (contd.)

Name of Diseases		1961	1966
Pneumonia (Broncho)	Outdoor	499	631
	Indoor	14	27
	Deaths	8	15
Scurvy	Outdoor	32	6
	Indoor	—	—
	Deaths	—	—
Small-pox	Outdoor	—	24
	Indoor	—	2
	Deaths	—	1
Syphilis : Congesital	Outdoor	42	11
	Indoor	2	—
	Deaths	—	—
Syphilis : Early	Outdoor	37	186
	Indoor	—	—
	Deaths	—	—
Tetanus	Outdoor	18	51
	Indoor	13	20
	Deaths	7	12
T.B. : Bones	Outdoor	5	289
	Indoor	5	—
	Deaths	—	—
T.B. : Intestines	Outdoor	21	42
	Indoor	8	2
	Deaths	2	1
T.B. : Meninges	Outdoor	1	9
	Indoor	4	4
	Deaths	4	2
T.B. : Pulmonary	Outdoor	1,412	1,838
	Indoor	48	48
	Deaths	26	22
Typhoid Fever	Outdoor	2,704	462
	Indoor	42	41
	Deaths	5	5
Hooping Cough	Outdoor	2,015	1,595
	Indoor	—	—
	Deaths	—	—

Source : Annual Report on the State of Health of West Bengal (Hospital Statistics) Part-II : 1961-66.

APPENDIX B

DEATHS FROM SELECTED CAUSES IN JALPĀIGURI DISTRICT :
1961-66

Causes	Deaths	1961	Deaths	1966
		Rate Per mille 1000		Rate Per mille
All causes :				
West Bengal.*	2,00,677	6.2	1,88,019	5.6
All causes : Jalpāiguri district	8,977	6.2	10,210	6.6
Accidents caused by venomous animals including snake	51	.04	34	.02
Anaemias	343	.3	625	.4
Bronchitis	92	.1	126	.08
Cholera	1	—	5	—
Diabetes	3	—	9	.06
Diphtheria	8	.01	14	.01
Dysentery	497	.4	665	.4
Early Infancy diseases	1,384	1.0	556	.4
Food Poisoning	6	—	—	—
Gastritis, etc.	188	.1	209	.1
Gonococcal infection	1	—	11	.01
Heart diseases (B26)	20	.01	43	.03
Leprosy	45	.03	50	.03
Malaria	76	.1	11	.01
Malignant neoplasms	36	.03	91	.06
Measles	5	—	7	—
Pneumonia	1,163	.9	927	.6
Pregnancy diseases	212	5.9	207	7.0
Senility	3,383	2.5	4,389	3.0
Small-pox	—	—	17	.01
Suicide	53	.04	29	.02
Syphilis	—	—	1	—
Tetanus	65	.05	55	.04
T.B.: Bones	—	—	—	—
— Meninges	3	—	1	—
— Pulmonary	269	.2	216	.1
— Other forms	—	—	7	—
Typhoid	43	.03	59	.04
Ulcer of Stomach	13	.01	24	.02

Source : Annual Report on the *State of Health of West Bengal*
(Hospital Statistics) : Part I : 1961-66.

* Excluding Calcutta.

APPENDIX C

MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS IN JALPÄIGURI DISTRICT : 1972

Name of the institution	Kind of institution	Block/ municipality	Post Office	No. of beds
Jalpāiguri*† General Hospital	District Hospital	Jalpāiguri Municipality	Jalpāiguri	401
Alipur Duār Subdivisional Hospital**	Subdivisional Hospital	Alipur Duār Municipality	Alipur Duār	125
Bhelakoba P.H.C.	Primary Health Centre	Jalpāiguri	Prasannanagar	10
Dhupguri† P.H.C.	"	Dhupguri	Dhupguri	20
Falakata† P.H.C.	"	Falakata	Falakata	20
Kamakhyaguri† P.H.C.	"	Kumargram	Kamakhyaguri	10
Mal† P.H.C.	"	Mal	Mal	20
Mangalbari† P.H.C.	"	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Maynaguri† P.H.C.	"	Matiali	Chalsa	10
Panch Kalguri† P.H.C.	"	Alipur Duār I	Panch Kalguri	6
Rajganj† P.H.C.	"	Rajganj	Payachari	20
Sulkapara† P.H.C.	"	Nagrakata	Sulkapara	10
Uttar Madarihat† P.H.C.	"	Madarihat	Madarihat	10
Bahadur S.H.C.†	Subsidiary Health Centre	Jalpāiguri	Bahadur	2
Barnes S.H.C.	"	Maynaguri	Barnes	4
Bhurumgorbari S.H.C.	"	"	Bakali	2
Chhoto Salkumar S.H.C.	"	Falakata	Chhoto Salkumar	2
Chura Bhandar (Bhangarati) S.H.C.	"	Maynaguri	Bhangsa	2
Jateswar S.H.C.	"	Falakata	Jateswar	2
Jhar Altargram S.H.C.	"	Dhupguri	Dhupguri	2
Kharija-Berubari S.H.C.	"	Jalpāiguri	Kharija-Berubari	2

*has also a State Chest, a Dental and a V.D. clinic and a Maternity and Child Welfare Centre.

**has also a State Chest, a Dental clinic and a Maternity and Child Welfare Centre.

†indicates the location of Family Planning Centre.

N.A. — Not available.

Appendix C (Contd.)

Name of the institution	Kind of institution	Block/ Municipality	Post Office	No. of beds
Kumargram S.H.C.	Subsidiary Health Centre	Kumargram Mal	Kumargram Chalk-Moulani	2
Lataguri S.H.C.	"	"	"	2
Munshipara (Salkumar) S.H.C.	"	Alipur Duār I	Salkumar Hat	2
Nandanpore Boalmari S.H.C.	"	Jalpāiguri	Boalmari	2
Odlabari S.H.C.	"	Mal	Hanabari	2
Ramshai S.H.C.	"	Maynaguri	Ramshai	2
Rangdhamali S.H.C.	"	Jalpāiguri	Rangdhamali	2
Samuktala S.H.C.	"	Alipur Duār II	Samuktala	10
Saptibari S.H.C.	"	Maynaguri	Saptibari	2
Satali S.H.C.	"	Kalchini	Satali-Mandalpur	2
Shakoajhora S.H.C.	"	Dhupguri	Sajnapara	2
Shikarpore S.H.C.	"	Rajganj	Shikarpore	2
Silbarihat S.H.C.	"	Alipur Duār I	Silbarihat	2
Singhimari (Domohini) S.H.C.	"	Maynaguri	Domohini	4
Turturi S.H.C.	"	Alipur Duār II	Dhowlajhora	2
Uttar Saripakuri	"	Mal	Krantihat	2
Alipur Duār Jail Hospital	State Special Hospital	Alipur Duār Municipality	Alipur Duār	8
Jalpāiguri Jail Hospital	"	Jalpāiguri Municipality	Jalpāiguri	50
Jalpāiguri Police Hospital	"	"	"	28
Janakalyan Maternity Hospital	Private Non-aided Hospital	"	"	12
Rani Ashrumati T.B. Hospital	"	"	"	60
Alipur Duār Hospital	Railway Hospital	Alipur Duār Municipality	Alipur Duār	71
New Jalpāiguri Hospital	"	Rajganj	Bhaktinagar	200
Buxa Duar Charitable Dispensary	State Special Dispensary	—	Buxa Duar	—
Dhupguri K.M. Dispensary	"	—	Dhupguri	—
Gairkata P.W. Dispensary	"	—	"	—
Matiali K.M. Dispensary	"	—	Matiali	—
Berubari Charitable Dispensary	Zilla Parishad Dispensary	—	Berubari	—
Bhatibari Charitable Dispensary	"	—	Bhatibari	—

Appendix C (Contd.)

Name of the institution	Kind of institution	Block/ Municipality	Post Office	No. of beds
Binyaguri	Zilla Parisad			
Charitable Dispensary	Dispensary	—	Kamarbhita	—
Jalpes	"	—	Maynaguri	—
Charitable Dispensary	"	—	Maynaguri	—
Kamakhyaguri	"	—	Kamakhyaguri	—
Charitable Dispensary	"	—	Kamakhyaguri	—
Lataguri	"	—	Lataguri	—
Charitable Dispensary	"	—	Lataguri	—
Madarihat	"	—	Madarihat	—
Charitable Dispensary	"	—	Madarihat	—
Mohitnagar	"	—	Mohitnagar	—
Charitable Dispensary	"	—	Mohitnagar	—
Rajganj	"	—	Rajganj	—
Charitable Dispensary	"	—	Rajganj	—
R.K. Mission	Private Aided Dispensary	—	Jalpāiguri	—
Charitable Dispensary	"	—	Jalpāiguri	—
Domohini Rly. Health Unit	Railway Dispensary	—	Maynaguri	—
Jayanti Rly. Health Unit	"	—	Kalchini	—
Mal Rly. Health Unit	"	—	Mal	—
Rajabhatkhawa Rly. Health Unit	"	—	Rajabhatkhawa	—
Chest Clinic attached to Rani Ashrumati T.B. Hospital	Private Non-Aided Chest Clinic	—	Jalpāiguri	—
Maynaguri Red Cross Chest Clinic	"	—	Maynaguri	—
Rajganj Leprosy Treatment Centre	State Leprosy Clinic	—	Rajganj	—
Jalpāiguri Leprosy Clinic	"	—	Jalpāiguri	—
Anguri M. & C.W. Centre	Zilla Parishad Leprosy Clinic	—	Jalpāiguri	—
Madhabdanga M. & C.W. Centre	State Maternity & Child Welfare Centre (clinic)	—	Anguri	—
Padamati M. & C.W. Centre	Centre (clinic)	—	Madhabdanga	—
	"	—	Padamati	—

Appendix C (Contd.)

Name of the institution	Kind of institution	Block/ Municipality	Post Office	No. of beds
Balaram M. & C.W. Centre	Private Aided Maternity & Child Welfare Centre	C/o Rajganj F. & C.W.P.	Rajganj	—
Kebalpara (Malivita) M. & C.W. Centre	"	"	"	—
Kakurjan M. & C.W. Centre	"	"	"	—
Mainghora M. & C.W. Centre	"	"	"	—
Mogradanga M. & C.W. Centre	"	"	"	—
R.K. Mission M. & C.W. Centre	"	"	Dangapara	—
Sannasikata M. & C.W. Centre	"	"	Rajganj	—
Janakalyan M. & C.W. Centre	Private Non-Aided Maternity & Child Welfare Centre	—	Dangapara	—
Red Cross Medical & M. & C.W. Centre	"	—	Jalpāiguri	—
Madarihat Mobile V.D. Clinic	State V.D. Clinic	—	Madarihat	—
Alipur Duār S.D. Hospital (Urban)	Family Planning Centre (Main Centre)	—	Alipur Duār	—
Bahadur S.H.C.	"	—	Bahadur	—
Dhupguri P.H.C.	"	—	Dhupguri	—
Falakata P.H.C.	"	—	Falakata	—
Jalpāiguri Dist. Hospital (Urban) (Main Centre)	Family Planning Centre	—	Jalpāiguri	—
Kamakhyaguri P.H.C.	"	—	Kamakhyaguri	—
Mal P.H.C.	"	—	Mal	—
Matiali Block	"	—	Matiali	—
Maynaguri P.H.C.	"	—	Maynaguri	—
Panchkalguri P.H.C.	"	—	Panchkalguri	—
Rajganj P.H.C.	"	—	Rajganj	—
Samuktala S.H.C.	"	—	Samuktala	—
Sulka para P.H.C.	"	—	Sulka para	—
Uttar Madarihat P.H.C.	"	—	Madarihat	—

CHAPTER XVII

OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES

The Labour Directorate runs four Labour Welfare Centres, one each at Matiali, Hamiltonganj and Birpara, and one Model Labour Welfare Centre at Satali in the plantation areas. These centres are located in areas having predominantly labour population. The daily average attendance in such a Centre is 84. The Labour Welfare Centres provide for primary and adult education, library facilities, group discussions, craft training, training in knitting and tailoring, physical training, recreation through radios, slide projectors, cinema shows, music and dance performances, cultural functions, games and sports (both indoor and outdoor). Steps are being taken to set up a new Centre at Gandrapara, Jalpāiguri.

LABOUR WELFARE

In the plantation areas reasonable amenities by way of housing, medical facilities, canteens, etc. are provided to the labourers under the Plantation Labour Act, 1951. The percentage of housing provided to such workers in recent years is as follows : 1969, 54.76 ; 1970, 54.99 ; 1971, 55.01 and 1972, 56.00 (approx.).

There is no prohibition in the State. The Superintendent of Excise, controlling the two ranges namely, Sadar and Alipur Duār, helps the Deputy Commissioner in the administration of excise laws. The consumption of liquor and narcotics is kept low through heavy duties, sale through licensed premises only (except for some tribals) and penalties for illicit manufacture. The department has issued the following major excise licences (1973): country spirit 67, *ganja* 32, and *bhang* 2.

PROHIBITION

As regards opium eaters, ration cards have been issued to persons as follows (as on 31 December 1972): in Police Stations Matiali 7 ; Falakata 3 ; Kotwali 53 ; Dhupguri 26 ; and Alipur Duār 12. The cards are only for those who are medically advised to take opium. Their number is declining slowly. The number of opium eaters was as follows during the last few years :

Year	No. of opium eaters
1968-69	112
1969-70	115
1970-71	105
1971-72	106
1972-73	101

ADVANCEMENT
OF BACKWARD
CLASSES AND
TRIBES

The Scheduled Castes and Tribes Welfare Department of the State Government frames policies for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes people and communicates the same to the District Office. In the district, a Special Officer implements the policies under the control of the Deputy Commissioner. There is a large tribal population in Alipur Duārs Subdivision which includes Meches, Oraons, Santals, Rabhas and Mundas. They are mostly landless agricultural labourer and are employed in large numbers in the tea gardens. The department has several welfare schemes for these people namely, water supply, minor irrigation, construction of dwelling houses, construction of village roads, supply of bullocks, construction of primary schools, nutrition programme, education schemes providing for tuition fees, examination fees, etc.

In water supply schemes, the department spent Rs. 40,000, Rs. 42,000 and Rs. 12,495 in 1969-70, 1970-71 and 1971-72 sinking 60, 26 and 14 cement concrete wells respectively. Under the special nutrition programme they spent Rs. 1,15,684 and Rs. 3,12,586 in 1971-72 and 1972-73 benefiting 12,000 children up to the age of six years and expectant mothers.

In pre-matric education schemes, the Department spent as follows during 1972-73 :

Name of schemes	Scheduled Castes		Scheduled Tribes	
	Expendi- ture Rs.	No. of bene- ficiaries	Expendi- ture Rs.	No. of bene- ficiaries
Tuition fees	5,378	150	1,15,000	2,393
Book grant	16,995	767	14,995	851
Boarding grant	22,850	144	66,240	456
Examination fees	6,980	272	3,440	137

The following table shows the number of beneficiaries and the amount spent on them up to June 1973 under the postmatric education schemes :

	Allotment received Rs.	Amount awarded Rs.	No. of beneficiaries
Scheduled Castes	2,50,000	1,17,334	247
Scheduled Tribes	25,000	3,564	7

The Department also spent Rs. 10,000 in 1970-71 and Rs. 30,000 in 1971-72 under the Centrally sponsored schemes for construction of Scheduled Tribes girls' hostel in New Town Girls' High School, Alipur Duār and Scheduled Castes girls' hostel in Mohan Singh High School, Rangali Bazar, Jalpāiguri.

Meches rear *eri* worms, spin *eri*-silk yarn and weave cloths with such yarn in their country-made looms. The Department set up a training-cum-production centre of sericulture at Kamakhyaguri in 1958 on a piece of land measuring 2.33 acres. At first, the trainees were taught to rear the *eri* worms and spin *eri*-silk yarn for a year on a stipend of Rs. 30 per month per trainee. The following figures show the expenditure incurred by the centre in recent years:

Year	Government allotment Rs.	Expenditure incurred Rs.
1969-70	39,873	39,724
1970-71	44,421	41,622
1971-72	46,848	46,805
1972-73	46,890	46,725

In areas of tribal concentration, sub-blocks were formed taking a few villages together for the betterment of the life of tribal people with economic assistance from the Central Government. The following table shows the expenditure in different sub-blocks for the Scheduled Tribes people in water supply, economic upliftment, etc. during the last few years :

Name of sub-block	Police Station	Period of assistance	Amount spent Rs.
Anandapur-			
Dhalbari	Mal	1965-70	1,03,708
Kamakhyaguri	Kumargram	1970-71	37,475
Munhipara	Alipur Duār	1970-71	48,216
Narathali	Kumargram	1966-69	1,42,046
Paschim Salkumar	Falakata	1970-71	29,956
Pukhuria	Alipur Duār	1968-69	68,249
Purba Salbari	Kumargram	1970-71	7,500
Totopara	Madarihat	1970-71	11,200

CHAPTER XVIII

PUBLIC LIFE & VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE DISTRICT IN THE STATE AND UNION LEGISLA- TURES

Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly)

In the First General Elections held in 1952, this district was represented in the State Assembly by 10 members elected from six constituencies, namely, Jalpāiguri (double-membered), Western Duars (double-membered), Maynaguri, Dhupguri, Alipur Duār (double-membered), and Central Duars (doubled-membered). One seat in the double-membered constituency of Jalpāiguri as also the single-membered Maynaguri seat was reserved for Scheduled Caste candidates. One seat was further reserved for Scheduled Tribe candidates in each of the double-membered constituencies of Western Duars, Alipur Duār and Central Duars. The jurisdiction of the Jalpāiguri constituency extended to Rajganj P.S. and Kotwali P.S. of Sadar Subdivision. The Western Duars constituency comprised the police stations of Mal, Nagrakata and Matiali together with Upper Tondou Forest Range of Maynaguri P.S. of Sadar Subdivision. The Maynaguri constituency was conterminous with the police station of the same name (excluding Upper Tondou Forest Range). The Dhupguri constituency was also conterminous with the police station of the same name. The Alipur Duār constituency consisted of the police stations of Kumargram and Alipur Duār together with Rajabhatkhawa, Damanpur, Buxa Ranges, Geropara railway station, Rajabhat, Bhatkhawa, Atiabari and Dima Tea Estates of Kalchini P.S. of Alipur Duars Subdivision. The Central Duars constituency was restricted to Kalchini police station (excluding the portions included within the Alipur Duār constituency) and also to the police stations of Madarihat and Falakata of Alipur Duars Subdivision.

In the Second General Elections held in 1957, the district was represented by 9 members elected from six constituencies, namely, Jalpāiguri (double-membered), Mal (double-membered), Maynaguri, Falakata, Kalchini (double-membered) and Alipur Duār. One seat was reserved for Scheduled Caste candidates in each of the constituencies of Jalpāiguri and Maynaguri and another one for Scheduled Tribe candidates in the constituencies of Mal and Kalchini. The Jalpāiguri constituency comprised the police stations of Jalpāiguri and Rajganj and unions nos. 4, 9, 10 in Maynaguri P.S. ; the Mal constituency—the police stations of Mal,

Matiali and Nagrakata and union no. 1 and Jadabpur Tea Estate and Upper Tondou Forest Range in Maynaguri P.S. and such part of Lower Tondou Forest Range as was included in Maynaguri P.S. and such part of Diana Forest Range as is included in Maynaguri and Dhupguri police stations in Sadar Subdivision; the Maynaguri constituency—the unions nos. 2, 3 and 5 to 8 in Maynaguri P.S. and unions nos. 1 to 5 and 7 and Lakshmikanta and Mogalkata Tea Estates in Dhupguri P.S. in Sadar Subdivision; the Falakata constituency—the Falakata P.S. in Alipur Duārs Subdivision and Dhupguri P.S. (excluding the portions included in the constituencies of Mal and Maynaguri); the Kalchini constituency—the police stations of Kalchini and Madarihat and unions nos. 1 to 5, 8 and 13 and Mathura Tea Estate, Sreenathpur Tea Estate, Patkapara Tea Estate and Paschim and Purba Majherdabari Tea Estates in Alipur Duār P.S. together with Jaldapara Game Sanctuary Range and Chilapata Forest Range in Alipur Duār P.S.; and Alipur Duār constituency—the police stations of Kumargram and Alipur Duār (excluding the portions included within the jurisdiction of the Kalchini constituency).

In pursuance of clause (a) of Section 4 of the Two Members Constituencies (Abolition) Act 1961 the existing double-membered constituencies were bifurcated, resulting in the formation of 9 constituencies, namely, Alipur Duār, Kalchini, Madarihat (ST), Falakata, Maynaguri (SC), Kharia (SC), Jalpāiguri, Nagrakata (ST), and Mal—each sending one member to the assembly in the Third General Elections in 1962. The Alipur Duār constituency consisted of the police stations of Kumargram and Alipur Duār (excluding unions nos. 1 to 5, 8 and 13 and Mathura Tea Estate, Sreenathpur Tea Estate, Patkapara Tea Estate and Paschim and Purba Majherdabari Tea Estates and portion of Jaldapara Game Sanctuary Range and portion of Chilapata Forest Range in Alipur Duār P.S. and Purba Chikliguri Chhit in Tufanganj P.S. of Koch Bihar District; the Kalchini constituency—the Kalchini P.S. (excluding unions nos. 1 to 3 and Satali, Dalsingpara, Torsa, Beech, Malangi, Central Duars, Bharnabari, Madhu, Saudamani, and Gopimohan Tea Estates and Uttar Barajhar Forest and Gabur Basra Forest) and the portions of the Alipur Duār P.S. excluded from the Alipur Duār constituency; the Madarihat constituency—the P.S. of the same name together with the portion

'SC' means reserved for Scheduled Castes candidate.
'ST' means reserved for Scheduled Tribes candidate.

of the Kalchini P.S. excluded from the Kalchini constituency ; the Falakata constituency — the police stations of Falakata and Dhupguri (excluding unions nos. 1 to 5 and 7 and Lakshmikanta and Mogalkata Tea Estates and portion of Diana Forest Range) ; the Maynaguri constituency — the unions nos. 2, 3, 5 to 8 in Maynaguri P.S. and unions nos. 1 to 5 and 7 Lakshmikanta and Mogalkata in Dhupguri P.S. ; the Kharia constituency — the union no. 10 in Rajganj P.S. and unions nos. 4, 9 and 10 in Maynaguri P.S. and unions nos. 4 to 12 in Jalpāiguri P.S. and Brahmapur Chhit in Mekhliganj P.S. of Koch Bihar district ; the Jalpāiguri constituency — the P.S. of the same name (excluding unions nos. 4 to 12) and Rajganj P.S. (excluding union no. 10) ; the Nagrakata constituency — the police stations of Nagrakata and Matiali and union no. 1 and Jadabpur Tea Estate and Upper Tondou Forest Range in Maynaguri P.S. and part of Lower Tondou Forest Range included in Maynaguri P.S. and part of Diana Forest Range included in police stations of Maynaguri and Dhupguri ; and the Mal constituency — the P.S. of the same name.

In the Fourth General Elections held in 1967, the representation of the district in the State Assembly was further raised to 11, the names of the 11 constituencies being Kumargram, Kalchini (ST), Alipur Duār, Falakata (SC), Madarihat (ST), Dhupguri, Nagrakata (ST), Maynaguri (SC), Mal (ST), Jalpāiguri and Rajganj (SC). The Jurisdictions of each of these constituencies were as follows : the Kumargram constituency — Chaprarpar, Bhatibari, Parakata, Tatpara, Mahakalguri, Samuktala and Turturi a.p. (Anchal Panchayat) and J.L. No. 128 of Alipur Duār P.S. and Kamkhyaguri, Bhalkabarabasia, Khoardanga, Chengmarī, and Kumargram a.p. in Kumargram P.S. ; the Kalchini constituency — the J.L. Nos. 6, 12, 25 to 34, 35 to 41, 234/37, 235/37, 236/37, and Raimatang and Chinchula Tea Estates in Kalchini P.S. together with Kumargram P.S. (excluding the portions of Kumargram P.S. included within the Kumargram constituency) and J.L. Nos. 44, 93, 140 and 141 in Alipur Duār P.S. ; the Alipur Duār constituency — the municipal areas of Alipur Duār town, Salkumar, Purbakathalbari, Patlakhawa, Chakoakheti, Pararpar, Tapsikhata, Banchukumari, Majherdabari and Vivekananda a.p., Mathura, Patkapara and Paschim Majherdabari Tea Gardens, Salkumar and Torsa Forest areas in Alipur Duār P.S. and Salkumar a.p. in Falakata P.S. ; the Falakata constituency — the Baraghoria, Gadang, and Sakojhora a.p. in Dhupguri P.S. and Falakata P.S. (excluding Salkumar a.p.) ; the Madarihat constituency — the police stations of Madari-

hat and Kalchini (excluding the portions included within the Kalchini constituency); the Dhupguri constituency—the Dhupguri P.S. (excluding the portions included in Falakata constituency); the Nagrakata constituency—the police stations of Nagrakata and Matiali and J.L. Nos. 85 and 89 in Maynaguri P.S.; the Maynaguri constituency—the P.S. of the same name (excluding the portions included in Nagrakata constituency); the Mal constituency—the P.S. of the same name; the Jalpāiguri constituency—the Jalpāiguri P.S. (excluding Barapatia, Nutanbas, Paharpur, Patkata, and Bhelacoba a.p. and Bhandiguri, Joypur, Karla Valley, Danguajhar, Raipur and Bhandarpur Tea Estates); and the Rajganj constituency—the Rajganj P.S. and the portions of the Jalpāiguri P.S. excluded from the Jalpāiguri constituency.

The mid-term elections held in 1969 and 1971 and the Fifth General Elections in 1972 were conducted on the basis of the delimitation done before the Fourth General Elections.

In pursuance of sub-section (1) of section 10 of the Delimitation Act, 1972 the Delimitation Commission raised the representation of the district to the Assembly to 12, the names of the constituencies being Kumargram (ST), Kalchini (ST), Alipur Duār, Falakata (SC), Madarihat (ST), Dhupguri (SC), Nagrakata (ST), Maynaguri (SC), Mal (ST), Kranti, Jalpāiguri and Rajganj (SC). The Kumargram constituency comprised the Kumargram police station and Turturi, Samuktala, Mahakalguri and Parokata grams and mouzas having J.L. Nos. 140—Dhaolajhora Tea Garden and 141—Kohinur Tea and Refugee Gardens in Alipur Duār police station; Kalchini constituency—the police station of the same name; the Alipur Duār constituency—police station of the same name (excluding the portions included within the Kumargram constituency and Falakata); the Falakata constituency—Munshipara (Salkumar I), Salkumar (II), Purba Kathalbari, Patlakhawa and Chakoagheti grams and mouzas having J.L. Nos. 44—Dakshin Barajhar Forest, 46—Torsa Forest and 53—Salkumar Forest in Alipur Duār police station and Falakata police station excluding Deomali, Dhanirampur (I), Dhanirampur (II) and Hedyetnagar (Jateswar I) grams and mouzas having J.L. Nos. 55—Ethebari Tea Garden, 60—Sarugaon Tea Garden, 64—Dalmoney Tea Garden, 65—Dalgaon Forest, 66—Tasati Tea Garden and 67—Dalgaon Tea Garden; the Madarihat constituency—Madarihat and Birpara police stations and portions of Falakata P. S. excluded from the Falakata consti-

tuency : Dhupguri constituency—police station of the same name and Uttar Saptibari (Saptibari I) and Dakshin Saptibari (Saptibari II) grams in Maynaguri police station ; the Nagrakata constituency — Banarhat and Nagrakata police stations ; the Maynaguri constituency — police station of the same name excluding Khagrabari (I), Tekatali (Khagrabari II), Uttar Saptibari (Saptibari I), Dakshin Saptibari (Saptibari II), Ramsai, Amguri, Domohani (I) and Singimari (Domohani II) grams and mouzas having J.L. Nos. 84 — Jadabpur Tea Garden and 85 — Nimna Tondu Forest and Barapatia Nutanbas, Patkata, Paharpur, Bhelacoba, Arabinda (I) and Araginda (II) grams, mouza having J.L. No. 1 and the Tea Estates falling within the periphery of these grams in Jalpāiguri police station ; the Mal constituency—Matiali police station and Odlabari and Mal grams and mouzas having J.L. Nos. 4 — Ellenbury Tea Garden, 5 — Washabari Tea Garden, 7 — Kalagaity Tea Garden, 9 — Saogaon Tea Garden, 10 — Lish River Tea Garden, 11 — Bagra Koti Tea Garden, 15 — Gojaldoba Tea Garden, 16 — Apalchand Forest, 18 — Odlabari Tea Garden, 21 — Manabari Tea Garden, 24 — Patharjora Tea Garden, 25 — Menglass Tea Garden, 26 — Dalimkote Tea Garden, 27 — Malnadi Tea Garden, 28 — Gurjangjhora Tea Garden, 29 — Tanbari Tea Garden, 30 — Nidamjhora Tea Garden, 31 — Rangamali Tea Garden, 33 — Syli Tea Garden, 34 — Ranichera Tea Garden, 36 — Sisubari Tea Garden, 38 — Belbari Tea Garden, 40 — Dam Dim Tea Garden and 41 — Kumlai Tea Garden, and any part of Tea Estates bearing J.L. Nos. 42, 43 and 45 (old J.L. Nos. 56, 59, 60 and 61) which may not be included in Mal gram in Mal police station ; the Kranti constituency—Mal police station (excluding the portions included within the Mal constituency together with the portions of Maynaguri P.S. excluded from the Maynaguri (SC) constituency) ; the Jalpāiguri constituency—police station of the same name (excluding the portions included with the Maynaguri constituency) ; and the Rajganj constituency—police station of the same name and Bahadur gram in Jalpāiguri police station.

Lok Sabha
House of the
People.

In the First General Elections, the district did not have exclusive representation to the Lok Sabha. It formed part of the North Bengal Parliamentary Constituency which comprised the districts of Dārjiling, Jalpāiguri and Koch Bihar. Of the three seats pertaining to this constituency one was reserved for a Scheduled Caste and another for Scheduled Tribe candidates.

In the Second General Elections, the district was represented

in the Lok Sabha by two parliamentary constituencies, namely, the Koch Bihar Parliamentary Constituency and Dārjiling Parliamentary Constituency, the former sending two members (including one belonging to the Scheduled Caste) and comprising the district of Koch Bīhar, Alipur Duārs Subdivisions, the police stations of Jalpāiguri, Raiganj and Dhupguri (excluding some areas of Diana Forest Range) and Maynaguri (excluding union no. 1 and Jadabpur Tea Estate and Upper Tondou Forest Range and part of Lower Tondou Forest Range and some parts of Diana Forest Range) in the Sadar Subdivision of the Jalpāiguri district and the latter sending one member and having jurisdiction over the district of Dārjiling, the police stations of Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata and the portions of the police stations of Maynaguri and Dhupguri excluded from the Koch Bihar constituency.

In the Third General Elections, the district was represented in the Lok Sabha by two members, one each from the Jalpāiguri and Dārjiling Parliamentary constituencies. The former was composed of the assembly constituencies of Alipur Duār, Kalchini, Madarihat, Falakata, Maynaguri, Kharia and Jalpāiguri and the latter of Nagrakata, Mal, Kalimpong, Dārjiling, Jore Bungalow, Siliguri and Phansidewa.

In the Fourth General Elections, the district was represented in the Lok Sabha by three members elected from the Parliamentary constituencies of Jalpāiguri (ST), Dārjiling and Raiganj. The Jalpāiguri Parliamentary Constituency consisted of the assembly constituencies of Tufanganj, Kumargram, Kalchini, Alipur Duār, Falakata, Madarihat and Dhupguri; the Dārjiling Parliamentary Constituency—the assembly constituencies of Nagrakata, Maynaguri, Mal, Kalimpong, Dārjiling, Jore Bungalow and Siliguri; and the Raiganj Parliamentary Constituency—the assembly constituencies of Jalpāiguri, Raiganj, Phansidewa, Chopra, Goalpokhar, Karandighi and Raiganj.

The mid-term elections to the Lok Sabha held in 1971 were conducted on the basis of the delimitation done before the Fourth General Elections.

The Delimitation Commission has in its order of June 1975, reduced the number of representation of the district to the Parliament from three to two, the names of the constituencies being Alipur Duār (ST) and Jalpāiguri. The former comprised the assembly constituencies of Tuganganj (SC), Kumargram (ST), Kalchini (ST), Alipur Duār, Falakata (SC), Madarihat (ST), and Nagrakata (ST) and the latter of Mekhliganj (SC), Dhupguri (SC),

Maynaguri (SC), Mal (ST), Kranti, Jalpāiguri and Rajganj (SC).

**POLITICAL PARTIES
AND ORGANISATIONS**

Vidhan Sabha

An assessment of the relative strength of different political parties at different times in the district can possibly be attempted from a study of the results of successive General Elections and mid-term polls to the Vidhan Sabha and the Lok Sabha.

For the 10 seats in the First General Elections, there were a total of 31 candidates of whom 10 belonged to the Congress, 5 each to the Socialist and Krishak Mazdoor Praza Party (KMPP), 2 each to the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Forward Bloc-Ruikar (FB-R) and 1 to the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP), and the rest were classed as independents. The Congress bagged 3 seats, one each from the constituencies of Maynaguri, Dhupguri and Alipur Duār securing respectively 62.72%, 57.30% and 66.71% of the valid votes and both the seats from each of the double-membered constituencies of Jalpāiguri, Western Duars and Central Duars polling 31.86% and 27.42%, 28.61% and 28.15%, and 26.47% and 19.92% respectively. The remaining seat of the Alipur Duār constituency went to the RSP which polled 26.85% of the valid votes.

In the Second General Elections, the Congress contested all the 9 seats, while the CPI contested 2, Praja Socialist Party (PSP) 5 and 14 persons as independents. The Congress this time won 7 seats, one each from the constituencies of Mal, Maynaguri and Alipur Duār having polled 22.90%, 51.87% and 49.23% respectively and both the seats from each of the double-membered constituencies of Jalpāiguri and Kalchini by polling 26.93% and 26.39% in the former and 28.30% and 23.56% in the latter. The PSP became successful in Falakata constituency where its share of valid votes was 47.29%, while the CPI in the remaining seat of the Mal constituency polling 21.76% of the valid votes.

In the Third General Elections, the Congress set up candidates for all the 9 seats, the PSP 8, the CPI 6 and the RSP 2 while the independents numbered 16. The Congress annexed 7 seats, namely, Alipur Duār, Falakata, Maynaguri, Kharia, Jalpāiguri, Nagrakata and Mal with 49.86%, 40.40%, 37.72%, 50.20%, 48.82%, 46.26%, 52.1% respectively of the valid votes. The RSP came out successful in Kalchini and Madarihāt by polling 43.35% and 38.31% of the valid votes respectively.

For the 11 seats in the Fourth General Elections there were a total of 43 contestants of whom 11 belonged to the Congress, 3 each to the Communist Party of India-Marxist CPI(M), Samyukta

Socialist Party (SSP), and Praja Socialist Party (PSP), 4 to the Bangla Congress (BAC), 2 to the Communist Party of India (CPI), 1 each to the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) and the Forward Bloc (FB) while 15 persons contested independently. The Congress won 6 seats, one each from the constituencies of Kumargram, Kalchini, Madarihat, Nagrakata, Mal and Jalpāiguri having polled 41.30%, 51.09%, 42.68%, 48.31%, 54.34% and 42.04% respectively of the valid votes. Falakata this time went to the PSP which polled 38.76%, Dhupguri and Rajganj to the SSP which obtained 47.09% and 39.07%, and Maynaguri to the BAC which mustered 35.88% of the valid votes. An independent candidate supported by the RSP came out successful in Alipur Duār by scoring 53.45% of the valid votes.

In the first mid-term poll, the number of contestants rose to 47, and jumped to 75 in the second mid-term poll, only to fall down to 30 in the Fifth General Elections. The Congress set up 11 candidates in the first mid-term poll, the Congress (R) and Congress (O) 10 each in the second mid-term poll, and Congress (R) 10 in the Fifth General Elections. The CPI(M) set up 2, 10 and 5 candidates respectively, the CPI 2, 3 and 1 respectively, the SSP 3, 5 and 3 respectively and the RSP 3, 8 and 4 respectively in the first and second mid-term polls and Fifth General Elections. The PSP put up 4 candidates each time in the first and second mid-term polls. Besides, a host of other parties contested the first mid-term poll, the respective figures of candidates put up by them being as follows: the Indian National Democratic Front 6, the Proutist 3, the BJS 2, the Lok Dal and the BAC 1 each. In the second mid-term poll 2 candidates were set up by the FB and 5 by the BAC. In the Fifth General Elections 1 candidate was put up by the Jharkhand Party. The Independents numbered 9, 18 and 6 in the first mid-term poll, second mid-term poll and Fifth General Elections respectively. In the first mid-term poll the Congress won 7 seats from the constituencies of Kumargram, Kalchini, Falakata, Nagrakata, Maynaguri, Mal and Rajganj. Its share of valid votes was 48.19%, 63.18%, 58.82%, 48.56%, 44.32%, 56.96% and 55.59% respectively in the aforesaid constituencies. In the second mid-term poll the Congress (R) captured 8 seats, namely, Kumargram, Kalchini, Alipur Duār, Falakata, Dhupguri, Mal, Jalpāiguri and Rajganj where it polled 43.94%, 38.76%, 41.84%, 32.95%, 29.33%, 30.43%, 49.88% and 35.27% respectively. In the Fifth General Elections its strength rose to 9, the seats captured being

Kumargram, Kalchini, Alipur Duar, Falakata, Dhupguri, Maynaguri, Mal, Jalpāiguri and Rajganj with 67.90%, 51.12%, 55.60%, 64.17%, 57.40%, 56.50%, 61.81%, 61.33% and 59.26% respectively of the valid votes. In the first mid-term poll the RSP captured the Alipur Duār and Madarihat seats by polling 51.28% and 46.14% respectively. Its influence remained confined to Madarihat only in the second mid-term poll as also in the Fifth General Elections when it obtained 33.10% and 43.71% respectively of the valid votes. The SSP came out successful in Dhupguri in the first mid-term poll with 49.15% of the valid votes. The CPI annexed the Jalpāiguri seat in the first mid-term poll by scoring 51.20% of the valid votes. In the second mid-term poll the CPI(M) won the Nagrakata seat by polling 57.81% of the valid votes which, however, it lost to the CPI in the Fifth General Elections when the latter got 57.16% of the valid votes. An independent candidate came out successful in Maynaguri in the second mid-term poll obtaining 34.97% of the valid votes.

In the Sixth General Elections the Congress and the Janata Party set up candidates for all the 12 seats, the CPI(M) 6, the RSP 5, the CPI 2 and Forward Bloc 1, while 31 persons contested independently. The CPI(M) bagged all the seats it contested, namely Falakata, Dhupguri, Nagrakata, Mal, Kranti and Rajganj securing 45.22%, 30.37%, 48.48%, 42.96%, 33.79% and 49.81% respectively of the valid votes. The RSP came out successful in all seats it contested, namely Kumargram, Kalchini, Alipur Duār, Madarihat and Maynaguri with 53.88%, 58.17%, 62.92%, 50.14% and 35.53% respectively of the valid votes to its credit. The Forward Bloc won the Jalpāiguri seat securing 38.45% of the valid votes.

Lok Sabha

For the 3 seats of the North Bengal Parliamentary constituency in the First General Elections, there were 8 contestants, of whom 3 belonged to the Congress and 1 each to FB(M) and KMPP while the rest were independents. The Congress annexed all the 3 seats by polling 20.60%, 18.98% and 18.40% of the valid votes. In the Second General Elections the Congress and the Forward Bloc (Marxist) set up candidates for both the seats of Koch Bihar Parliamentary constituency. The Congress and the CPI set up one candidate each for the Dārjiling seat while another person contested independently. Besides obtaining the Dārjiling seat with 43.27% of the valid votes, the Congress also bagged both the seats of the Koch Bihar constituency by polling

32.21% and 25.67% of the valid votes. In the Third General Elections the Congress, the RSP and the PSP put up 1 candidate each for the Jalpāiguri seat. A total of 5 candidates (including 1 independent) contested for the Dārjiling seat, 1 each being put by the Congress, the CPI, the BJS and the Gurkha League. Both the seats went to the Congress which polled 45.40% in Jalpāiguri and 35.03% in Dārjiling. In the Fourth General Elections the Congress fielded candidates for each of the seats of the Jalpāiguri, Dārjiling and Raiganj Parliamentary constituencies. Besides, 3 candidates contested independently for the Jalpāiguri seat. The CPI(M) and BJS put up 1 candidate each for the Dārjiling seat while the SSP, the PSP and the FB 1 candidate each for the Raiganj seat, 2 persons contested independently, 1 each for the Dārjiling and the Raiganj seats. The Congress emerged victorious in Jalpāiguri and Raiganj where its share of valid votes was 44.03% and 26.96% respectively. The Dārjiling seat went to an independent female candidate who polled 39.27% of the valid votes. In the mid-term polls, there were a total of 7 candidates, including 2 independents, for the Jalpāiguri seat, of whom 1 each belonged to the Congress (O), the Congress(R), the CPI(M), the SSP and the RSP. The contestants numbered 5 (including 3 independents) for the Dārjiling seat, of whom 1 each belonged to the CPI(M) and the PSP. The Congress (R), the Congress (O), the FB, the PSP and the CPI(M) put up 1 candidate each for the Raiganj seat. The Congress (R) annexed the Jalpāiguri and the Raiganj seats by polling 39.17% and 49.55% respectively of the valid votes. The Dārjiling seat went to the CPI(M) which polled 33.11% of the valid votes.

In the sixth General Elections of 1977 there the Congress and the RSP fought each other for the Alipur Duār seat the latter coming out victorious with 56.87% of the valid votes. Besides candidates put up by the Congress and the SUCI two independents contested for the Jalpāiguri seat where one independent candidate came out successful with 57.25% of the valid votes to his credit.

In the mid-term elections held in 1980, the RSP and the CPI(M) set up candidates for the Alipur Duār and the Jalpāiguri seats respectively, while the Congress(I) and the Congress(U) contested for both the seats. The Janata Party and the SUCI fought only for the Jalpāiguri seat. A total of five candidates contested independently. The RSP won the Alipur Duār seat

by polling 60% of the valid votes, while the CPI(M), the Jalpāiguri seat with 59.99% of the valid votes.

Vidhan Parishad
(Legislative
Council)

The district did not have exclusive representation to the Legislative Council from any of the Graduates', the Teachers' and the Local Authorities' constituencies, when the Delimitation of the Council Constituencies Order (West Bengal) was passed in 1951. It formed part of the West Bengal Graduates' and the West Bengal Teachers' and the West Bengal Local Authorities' constituencies, each sending 3 representatives to the Council. By the amendment order of 1961, the district came to be incorporated in West Bengal North Graduates' and the West Bengal North Teachers' constituencies, each sending 1 representative to the Council. It was, however, allotted 1 seat from the Jalpāiguri Local Authorities' constituency. The Council was abolished in 1969.

NEWSPAPERS

A number of newspapers began to be published in the district from the 1920s. A Bengali weekly named *Trisrotā* was published from Jalpāiguri in 1926. Another Bengali weekly named *Janamat* was published from the district headquarters and an English weekly named *Muktibāhinī* began publication in 1928. A fortnightly named *Deśbandhu* was published from the district headquarters for a year.

After Independence, a weekly named *Bārtā* began publication. The Jalpāiguri Chā Karmachari Samiti began publication of its weekly named *Ahvān*. *Nisān* was another Bengali weekly which

Name	Address	Language	Periodicity
1. Navorai	Jalpāiguri	Bengali	bi-weekly
2. Bārtā	"	"	weekly
3. Dānpiteder Samāchār	"	"	"
4. Janamat	"	English & Bengali	"
5. Trisrotā	"	English & Bengali	"
6. Jalpāiguri	"	Bengali	fortnightly
7. Yātrik	Alipur Duār	Bengali	fortnightly
8. Uttarāsā	Jalpāiguri	"	"
9. Homoco Darpan	"	"	monthly
10. Pābak	Maynaguri	"	"
11. Sambodhi	Jalpāiguri	"	"
12. Simāntik	"	"	"
13. Road Side	Alipur Duār	Bengali, Hindi, English, Arabic, and Sanskrit	quarterly
14. Korak	Jalpāiguri	Bengali	annually
15. Kachi Pātā	Alipur Duār	English & Bengali	bi-weekly

continued for a few years. Danpiteder Asar, a juvenile organization published a weekly named *Dānpiteder Samāchār*. A weekly named *Amāder Kathā* and a monthly named *Uttarpath* and another weekly named *Nirapeksha* were published for some time from the district headquarters. From Alipur Duār were published some journals from time to time named *Duarsbāñī*, *Uttar-Bangla*, *Himalay*, *Dābī*, etc. In the previous page is the list of journals and newspapers published from the district which are registered with the Registrar of Newspapers, India.¹

The following list shows the names of journals published from different educational institutions of the district.²

Name	Address
1. Fanindra Dev Vidyalaya Patrika	Fanindra Dev Institution, Jalpāiguri
2. Mohan Singh Uchcha Vidyalaya Patrika	Mohan Singh Higher Secondary School, Jalpāiguri
3. Sonāli	Sonali Girls' Higher Secondary School, Jalpāiguri
4. Alipur Duār Sāndhya College Patrika	Alipur Duār College, Alipur Duār
5. Ananda Chandra College Patrika	Ananda Chandra College, Jalpāiguri
6. Jalpāiguri Polytechnic Institute Patrika	Jalpāiguri Polytechnic Institute, Jalpāiguri

In A.D. 1709, Sarvadev Raikat, the king of Baikunthapur started some voluntary service for his people by excavating tanks and by establishing a Śiva and a Kali temple for them. King Sarvadeva also excavated several tanks named Jordighi, Fatapukur dighi, Jalpeś dighi and Kundar dighi. He also started several fairs. In 1900, a voluntary social service organization named Arya Natya Samaj was formed in the district headquarters with the help of some local gentlemen. A Congress Seva Dal was formed in 1922 in the district to combat the ravages of flood in the area. This organization continued up to 1927 doing voluntary

VOLUNTARY SOCIAL
SERVICE ORGANI-
ZATIONS

¹ Government of India, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, *Press in India, 1971, 15th Annual Report of the Registrar of Newspapers, India, Part-II*. New Delhi, 1972, pp. 1114-1285.

² *loc. cit.*

service among the distressed. A cooperative organization used to supply the daily necessities to the Adivasis of the area at that time. Much work was also done between 1935 and 1938 among the people by establishing rural libraries and by advocating the uplift of the *harijans*.

In 1943, the Jalpāiguri Relief Committee was formed to help the famine-stricken people of the area. A food committee also functioned up to 1946.

Some voluntary organizations like Gana Kalyan Samiti, Indian Red Cross Society, Marwari Relief Society, etc. came to the rescue of the suffering people during the floods of 1950 and later years.

Womens' Welfare

In the first decade of this century, the first Congress Mahila Samiti was organized in the district. In 1942, the Mahila Atmaraksha Samiti was formed. It worked among the distressed during the famine of 1943. This Samiti established two libraries. The Jalpāiguri Mahila Samiti, a branch of the All India Mahila Samiti, served the famine-stricken people in 1943-44. In 1955, the Social Welfare Board established Welfare Centres for Women and Children in different areas. These centres imparted social education among women. There are also 12 milk centres of the Paschimbanga Mahila Samiti in the town.

Child Welfare

In 1937-38, child welfare activities were undertaken by Sisuniketan, a voluntary social service organization of Jalpāiguri. There children learnt through games and sports. Sabpeyechhir Asar had also a branch at the district headquarters in 1943. In 1944, a children's education centre named Sisumahal was started in the district town. In 1954, a juvenile organization named Danpitedar Asar started working for the physical and mental growth of children. This organization tried to develop the mind of the children through book banks, exhibitions, nutrition programmes, etc. The Jalpāiguri Youngmen's Association have also started a centre for physical and mental culture of the children named Sisu-udyān. Some other organizations also worked from time to time for child welfare namely, 'Mile-Mise' of Desbandhupara, the juvenile section of the Cultural Association at Deshbandhunagar, etc.

A juvenile organization named Kishor-Bahini has been formed recently. After the floods of 1954 five *Āśramas* grew up in Jalpāiguri, Maynaguri, Dhupguri, Falakata and Chikliguri for child welfare aided by the Dr. B. C. Roy Flood Relief Fund. In 1958, the Social Welfare Directorate of the State Education

Department took over the management of these *Āśramas* and confined the activities to two *Āśramas*, namely, an organization for the welfare of girls at Raikatpara in Jalpāiguri town and another organization for the welfare of boys at Falakata. The *Āśrama* at Chikliguri has now been named 'Save the Child' and has been placed under the West Bengal Child Welfare Board. In 1966, a branch of this Board was opened in Jalpāiguri town.

Welfare activities among the tribals through voluntary agencies have been undertaken in different places from time to time. The Christian Missionaries worked among the tribal people of Denguaḥar, Falakata, Samuktala, Damanpur, Nagrakata, etc. Normal welfare activities among these people are carried on by the Tribal Welfare Department of the State Government which has been dealt with in Chapter XVII.

Tribal Welfare



CHAPTER XIX

PLACES OF INTEREST

ALIPUR DUĀR — Situated on the north bank of the Kaljani river in $26^{\circ} 29' \text{N}$ and $89^{\circ} 32' \text{E}$ it is a subdivisional municipal town with a population of 36,667 (including 3,032 Scheduled Castes and 215 Scheduled Tribes people) according to the Census of 1971. It is about 110 km. east of Jalpāiguri town. It derives its name from the late Col. Hedayet Ali Khan who did laudable service in the Bhutan war and was stationed here as the first Extra-Assistant Commissioner. It is a trading centre and has a big railway colony. It is connected by road with Jalpāiguri and Buxā. The rains are heavy here lasting from May to September. Heat also becomes oppressive in hot weather, when there is no rain. A number of old beds of the Kaljani river are to be found in the area, and one of these, now a big pool, runs through the town. It was formerly an unhealthy place owing to its swampy climate. The Alipur Duār Junction and the Alipur Duār stations of the North-East Frontier Railway are on the route between Sealdah and Dibrugarh, the former also being on the routes between Lucknow and Gauhati and between Katihar and Lumding. The section between Alipur Duār Junction and Bamanhat passes through Alipur Duār Court and Alipur Duār stations. A number of colonies with new settlers have grown around the place after the Partition. A number of sites worth visiting are there in the neighbourhood namely, Yamduar on the Sankosh, Jainti, Bhutanghat, etc.

The non-municipal urban area of Alipur Duār Railway Junction has a population of 17,787 (including 2,291 Scheduled Castes and 79 Scheduled Tribes persons) as per the Census of 1971.

AMBARI FALAKATA — A village (J.L. No. 22) in Rajganj police station, had a population of 855 in 1971. The land on both sides of the river Karatoya here is high and sandy, and the crops grown are mustard and *aus* paddy.

BAGRAKOT — A station on the Katihar-Lumding section (metre gauge) of the North-East Frontier Railway, it is located near the foot of the hills on the Dārjiling border, and has a cooler atmosphere in comparison to Dam Dim, which is about 10.87 km. away from here. There are four tea gardens namely, Bagrakot Tea Garden I, II, III and IV (J.L. No. 11), all in Mal police station, with a total population of 5,736 in 1971.

BANARHAT — A place in Dhupguri police station, it has a railway station on the Katihar-Lumding section of the North-East Frontier Railway. It is surrounded by tea gardens, and practically the village goes by the name of Banarhat Tea Garden (J.L. No. 17) which had a population of 8,171 in 1971.

BARNES — A village (J.L. No. 31) in Maynaguri police station it has a rural health centre, post office, etc. It was formerly a station on the old Bengal-Duars Railway, and had a branch line connecting it with Barnes Ghat on the left bank of the Tista opposite Jalpāiguri connected by a railway-controlled ferry. Formerly, Barnes Ghat used to be the terminus of the Bengal-Duars Railway and passenger and goods traffic was ferried across the river to avail of the Eastern Bengal Railway at Jalpāiguri. Later, the construction of the southern branch of the railway in 1898-1900 to Lalmanir Hat on the Dhubri extension of the Eastern Bengal Railway afforded through communication avoiding the crossing of the Tista. This place has almost been wiped out in the Tista flood of 1968.

BHELAKOBA — A railway station (J.L. No. 2) on the Chamagram-New-Bongaigaon section of the North-East Frontier Railway, it is also connected by road carrying heavy traffic, specially during the jute-cropping season. The area is noted as a jute-growing area. It is within Jalpāiguri police station and the population here numbered 8,931 in 1971.

BUXĀ — A place connected by a good road running through a reserved forest with Buxa Road station on the Jainti-Rajabhatkhawa section of the North-East Frontier Railway. There was formerly a military cantonment which later became a political prisoners' detention camp and has of late been the Tibetan Refugee Lama Asrama. The place is situated on a gravel plateau 548.64 metres above sea level in 26° 46' N and 89° 35' E at the foot of the Bhutan Hills.

CHALSA — A junction station on the Katihar-Lumding (metre-gauge) section of the North-East Frontier Railway. A metalled road connects it with Matiali Hat, one of the largest markets in the tea garden area.

The Chalsa Mahabari (J.L. No. 16) and the Chalsa Tea Garden (J.L. No. 13), both in Matiali police station had respectively 2,071 and 2,949 people in 1971.

CHHOTA SINCHULA — A peak, about 1733.60 metres above sea level, of the Sinchula range, it is situated about 11.27 km. north

of Buxa cantonment in $26^{\circ} 47' N.$ and $89^{\circ} 34' E.$ This peak, offering a beautiful sight, is the highest point in the district.

DAM DIM — A station on the Katihar-Lumding section (metre gauge) of the North-East Frontier Railway, it had a police station earlier which was removed to Mal in 1908, to which this village belongs. Formely the place was malarious and unhealthy. Now there are some tea gardens in the surrounding area and the market here is attended largely by the garden labourers.

Dam Dim Hat (J.L. No. 37) had a population of 1,426 in 1971, while the two tea gardens (J.L. No. 40) here had a population of 5,156 the same year.

DHUPGURI — A station (J.L. No. 89) having the police station of the same name on the Chamagram-New Bongaigaon section of the North-East Frontier Railway, it is situated between Maynaguri and Falakata. It has a big market to which jute is brought for sale. It is the centre of a fertile rice-growing area and is connected by roads with all important places on all sides. It is a non-municipal town with a population of 16,808 (including 5,314 Scheduled Castes and 56 Scheduled Tribes persons) according to the Census of 1971.

DOMOHANI — A station (J.L. No. 19) in Maynaguri police station on the New Mal-Changrabandha section of the North-East Frontier Railway it has a railway workshop and a market. A good road connects it with Maynaguri, situated 4.83 km. to the north-east and there is a ferry across the river Tista to Paharpur on the Jalpāiguri-Dam Dim road. A non-municipal town it has a population of 7,706 (including 3,304 Scheduled Castes and 240 Scheduled Tribes persons) according to the 1971 Census.

FALAKATA — A station (J.L. No. 21) in the police station of the same name on the Chamagram-New Bongaigaon section of the North-East Frontier Railway, it is 88 km. away from New Jalpāiguri Railway station. It is situated on the east bank of the river Mujnai close to the boundary of the Koch Bihar district. It was formerly the headquarters of the present Alipur Duārs subdivision. It is a non-municipal town with a population of 7,194 (including 918 Scheduled Castes and 91 Scheduled Tribes persons) according to the 1971 Census. In 1961, the population here was 3,011. It has an important market in which some of the best jute, tobacco and mustard grown in this area and Western Duars are sold.

GAIRKATA — A village (J.L. No. 25) on the river Angrabasha in Dhupguri police station, it has a big market. Several roads radiate from here and proceed on the north towards the tea

gardens and on the south to the paddy-growing areas. There are also some tea gardens at this place. In 1971, the population here was 4,479. The Gaikata Tea Garden (J.L. No. 26), situated close by, had a population of 3,744 in 1971.

GARH MENDABARI (Mouza Dakshin Barajhar Forest, J.L. No. 12, P.S. Alipur Duār) — In the deep forest of Chilapata and on the bank of the river Bania close to the Jaldapara Wild Game Sanctuary some ruins first came to light during the third decade of this century. Lying close to the Jaldapara Game Sanctuary the place can be approached from Hasimara, Falakata and Alipur Duār. It is 56.35 km. from Koch Bihar and now a dusty road to the place has been carved out by contractors' trucks. The State Directorate of Archaeology made some excavations at the site recently and has unearthed a fort-like construction. There is a brick wall surrounded by ditches at the spot with an opening on each of the four sides. There are two cornices on the walls to the south and west. There are a number of shelves and attached chimneys in a row on the western wall. Besides bricks of varying sizes, (18" × 12" × 2" or 7½" × 8" × 1.6") stone pieces were used in the construction. A drain coming from the northern wall has fallen to the river Bania through the eastern wall. This drain is entirely built of brick and stone. It is not known if this served as the harbour of boats or was just a drain for the outfall of excess water. This fort is called the Fort of Nal Raja and it occupies a space of about 1.295 km. square. The State Directorate of Archaeology have placed it in the age of the Guptas. To the east and west of the wall of the fort there are two small rooms, meant probably for the watch and ward staff. There are also a number of ponds and uplands within the fort. There is a ruin of an old temple outside the eastern wall. Besides, numerous stone pieces are scattered all around.

These ruins have similarities with those at Bhitargarh, much of which now falls in Bangladesh. That city comprised four separate enclosures, the innermost being the palace of Prithu Raja, whose date is unknown, but who probably preceded the Pala dynasty of the ninth century.¹ The Mendabari ruins, from its construction, appear to be the castle of a king or a fort or just a walled city.² Some say it was constructed by Naranarayan Singh.

¹ J. F. Gruning — *East Bengal and Assam District Gazetteers: Jalpāiguri*, Allahabad, 1911, p. 145.

² A. Mitra — *Census 1951: West Bengal: District Handbooks: Jalpāiguri*, Calcutta, 1954, p. 150. Also see P. C. Das Gupta — *Nal Rajar-Garh*, Calcutta, 1968.

the Koch Bihar king in A.D. 1510, while according to some it was constructed by the Bhutias. There are others who name it 'Chita Kota Garh'.¹ It is perhaps one of the many fortresses built by the said Naranarayan, the pronunciation of whose name became 'Nala'. It is said that the armed forces of the king were commanded by his younger brother, Sukladhwaj, who was better known as Chila Rai because he swooped upon his enemies like a hawk. The place of his residence near Tufanganj is still called Chila Khana.

GORUMARA — see Lataguri.

HAMILTONGANJ — It [J.L. No. 29 (iii)] is the headquarters of the Kalchini Development Block and is within Kalchini police station. It is connected by road with Jalpāiguri and Koch Bihar. It has a big market. In 1961, the population here numbered 2,347.

HASIMARA — A station on the Katihar-Lumding (meter gauge) section of the North-East Frontier Railway, it is one of the points from where the Jaldapara Game Sanctuary can be approached. One has to go to Baradabari 6.44 kms. away from where an excursion to the Sanctuary can be arranged. There is a tourist lodge at Baradabari having facilities for board and lodging. A station wagon can be hired from here for a sight-seeing tour to the Sanctuary which is known for its one-horned rhino population, besides other animals. Hasimara is surrounded by many tea gardens and has a big market.

JALDAPARA — see above (Hasimara)

JALPĀIGURI — The district town and the headquarters of the Jalpāiguri Civil Division, it has a population of 55,159 (including 5,479 Scheduled Castes and 295 Scheduled Tribes persons) according to the 1971 Census. In 1961, the population was 48,738. The population here over the decade 1961-71 has increased by 13.56 per cent, while the sex-ratio in 1971 is 794 females per 1,000 males. Situated on the right bank of the Tista river in 26° 32' N. and 88° 43' E. it is said that it derives its name from the olive trees (*Jalpai* in Bengali) growing here some of which were last seen in 1900. The Karla river divides the town into two parts, and the river is spanned by a few bridges. A picturesque town, it has several avenues shaded by trees. A glimpse of the snow-clad peaks of the Himalayas can be had from near the Karla river.

¹ *Jalpāiguri District Centenary Volume*, p. 143.

Fires and floods occurred frequently in this town in the past. In 1878, several Government offices, except the treasury, were burnt. Fires broke out sporadically in other offices in 1897, 1898, 1905, 1906, 1907, etc.

The municipality here was constituted in 1885, the Board consisting of 13 commissioners, including 3 *ex-officio* members.

The town, though small, does an extensive trade through the railways and the roadways. Tea is the most important item of trade here, though paddy, jute, tobacco and timber are also sold. Processing of tea and manufacture of plywood chests are some of the industries here. The Europeans opened a tea company here in 1874, which was followed by another in 1879 opened by a few Bengali entrepreneurs. The Jalpāiguri Club or the Planters' Club, an exclusive club for European members in the beginning, was opened in the town in 1885. It built its own building in 1894. A number of temples are there in and around the town, some of which are quite old namely, Maskalai Bari Smanan Kali temple, Baikunthanath temple, Dinbazar Kalibari, Babupara Jogmaya Kali temple, Bhadrakali in Pandapara, etc. The Brahmo Samaj temple was established in the heart of the town in 1901, and its new temple was constructed in 1913. Sri Ramakrishna Asrama was established here in 1923. A big mosque was constructed on the Siliguri road by Rahim Bux Peskar in 1875 and another at Dinbazar by Mohammad Ibrahim in 1902. The Church near the cutcherry was erected in 1882. Another church was built on Haldibari road in 1896.

The town suffered loss of lives and property in the devastating flood of the Tista which took place on the night of 4 October, 1968.

JALPEŚ (Garhtali Jalpeś) — A village (J.L. No. 68) in Maynaguri, police station, it is situated 6.44 km. south-east of Maynaguri. Situated on the bank of the Jhorda river the main temple here combines the Hindu and Muslim architectures. Apart from the dome over the main *sanctum*, there are four other domes on the four corners of the temple. The *sanctum* housing a *Śivaliṅgam* is 3.05 metres underground from where the extreme end of the dome measures 38.71 metres. The temple has the look of a mosque of north India. It is said that Prannarayan, the king of Koch Bihar, reconstructed the temple over an older site, and in a dream he was directed to bring the *Śivaliṅgam* from Garhtali Jalpeś and to house *him* at this place. He brought Muslim architects from

Delhi and had the temple built in A.D. 1665. It was completed by his great grandson.

The temple, a two-storied *navaratna* structure, suffered great damage in an earthquake in June 1897 and a part of the second storey was completely devastated. After the devastation the Secretary of State for India in Council formed a trust committee and handed over the work of supervision to it. The Committee reconstructed the broken places at great costs. King Prannarayan had earlier placed 46 *jots* as *devottar* for the maintenance of the temple, but the Government in 1891 took away those *devottar* properties and granted some allowances for the priests and for maintenance of the temple. A committee named Jalpeś Temple Committee was formed to look after the working of the temple. The temple was not properly looked after and then the aforesaid damages occurred during the earthquake of 1897. Government of India in 1899 formed a committee of trustees to repair and reconstruct the temple. The temple, however, was reconstructed over the years with the help of public donations.

A big fair called '*Jalpeś Melā*' on the occasion of Śivarātri festival is held here every year in February which is attended by a large number of persons coming from different parts of North Bengal. The Temple Committee organises the fair since 1955, though it was earlier taken over by Government in 1891 along with its *devottar* properties.

KAMAKHYAGURI — Kamakhyaguri, a big mouza, now sprawls over three Villages, namely, Uttar Kamakhyaguri (J.L. No. 178) with a population of 6,026 and an area of 350.80 sq. km. in 1971, Dakshin Kamakhyaguri (J. L. No. 176) with a population of 1,794 and an area of 460.34 sq. km., and Madhya Kamakhyaguri (J. L. No. 177) with a population of 1,928 and an area of 457.24 sq. km. all in Kumargram police station. The place is 30 km. north-east of Alipur Duār and adjacent to Assam. The three villages together constitute a large marketing centre for rice, paddy, jute and mustard seeds. There is an sericulture farm and a number of shops and industrial establishments at this place. It has a railway station on the Katihar-Lumding section of the North-East Frontier Railway. There are three tea gardens surrounding this village. The total population of the place in 1971 was 12,939.

KUMARGRAM — A village (J. L. No. 37) and the headquarters of the police station and of the N.E.S. Block of the same name.

it has the usual establishments, like the Primary Health Centre, Post Office, School, etc. as are to be found in similar places elsewhere. In 1971, the population here numbered 2,848. Roads radiate from here to Alipur Duārs and to Chakchaka on the Koch Bihar boundary.

LATAGURI — A village (J. L. No. 81) in Mal police station, it had a population of 3,287 in 1971. It is 14 km. from Maynaguri and 22 km. from Chalsa, and is famous for timber. The Lata-guri-Ramshai branch of the North-East Frontier Railway originates from here and terminates at Ramshai.

Lataguri Junction is, however, a station on the New Mal-Changrabandha section of the North-East Frontier Railway. The Gorumara Sanctuary is 6.44 km. from here, and there is a forest Department bungalow at Gorumara.

MADARIHAT — A station on the Lumding-Katihar section of the North-East Frontier Railway and the headquarters of the police station of the same name. It is on the west or right bank of the Torsa river. A good road connects it with Falakata on the south and the Hantapara tea garden and market on the north. Being a market-place it is developing rapidly and the main item of trade is jute. Rangali Bazar, a place near this place, is a good argicultural area. The surrounding lands have been brought under cultivation by Oraon and Nepali cultivators for many years. It is the railhead and the bus terminus for journeys to Hollong Forest Lodge, situated 6 km. away, from where a sight-seeing tour of the Jaldapara Wild Life Sanctuary can be arranged. This lodge was opened on 9 October, 1972. The names of the reservation authority are given in the List of Dak Bungalows, etc. appearing elsewhere. A mini-bus also plies between Bagdogra and Hollong *via* Siliguri, Jalpāiguri and Madarihat.

MAYNAGURI — A non-municipal town on the Jhorda river, 11.27 km. from Jalpāiguri. The road from Jalpāiguri to Alipur Duār passes through it, and several other roads radiate from here, the principal one connecting it with Domohani and Ramshai Railway stations. It has a police station of the same name, and is a town with a population of 15,808 (including 4,484 Scheduled Castes and 126 Scheduled Tribes persons) according to the 1971 Census.

The ruins of the superstructure of the Bateśvara temple are to be found at Madhavdanga (J. L. No. 54) in this police station on the road leading from here to Jalpeś. The ruins show that it

was a stone temple. 'The *sikhara* has collapsed, which from *anda-manjaris* seem to have been of the type similar to Kamakhya temple near Gauhati. Its date of erection is not known. It originally consisted of a *mandapa*, *antarala* and *garbhagriha*. A few *dissecta membra* indicate it bore concentric circles like those of the temples of Sibsagar'.¹ This temple is situated to the west of Jhorda river. A big banyan (*bat*) tree stands at the site, from which the temple derives its name. The upper panel of a door frame with *Kirtimukh* engravings has been found near by; and there are also two pillars with sculptures on top close to it.²

MAL — A station having the police station of the same name on the New Mal-Changrabandha section of the North-East Frontier Railway, it can also be reached from New Mal Junction station. The Mal Junction station is located on the Katihar-Lumding (metre gauge) line of the same railway. Branch lines radiate from here to Madarihat, Bagrakot and other places. There is a big market in the neighbourhood at Bataigol to which the labourers from the local tea-gardens flock for their purchases. It is a non-municipal town with a population of 10,951 (including 721 Scheduled Castes and 320 Scheduled Tribes persons) according to the 1971 Census.

MATIALI HAT — Formerly, a small bazar in the midst of a few tea gardens, it is now a populous locality (J. L. No. 12) and the headquarters of the police station of the same name. It is connected by a metalled road with the Chalsa railway station, situated 8.05 km. to the south. It had a population of 3,010 in 1971, while the Matiali Tea Garden (J.L.No. 10) had a population of 4,108 that year. The market here is frequented by thousands of tea garden labourers.

NAGRAKATA — A station in the police station of the same name on the Katihar-Lumding section (metre gauge) of the North-East Frontier Railway. The name is said to be derived from Nagra Bhutias who used to live here. The village Nagrakata (J.L.No. 7) had a population of 331 in 1971, while the Nagrakata Tea Garden (J. L. No. 6) had 2,772 during the same period. The N.E.S. Block headquarters of Nagrakata is situated at Sulkapara. The Nagrakata area is, however, more under tea plantation than

¹ A. Banerji — 'Temples of Jalpāiguri', in *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Vol. XIII, Nos. 1-4, 1971, p. 196.

² S. Bhattacharya and M. Bhattacharya — 'Jalpāiguri Pratnakirti', in *Jalpāiguri District Centenary Souvenir : 1869-1968*, ed. C. C. Sanyal and others, Jalpāiguri, 1971, p. 401.

under agricultural operation. It is connected by road with Chalsa and Banarhat.

NEW MAYNAGURI—A railway station on the Assam Railway, it is famed for a temple in the neighbouring village named Byangkandi. That place is 1.6 km. from the Government hospital and on the other bank of the Jhorda river. The temple is built of stone and is locally called Sodar Khai. The three walls of the inner sanctum still stand intact, but the temple as a whole shows signs of subsiding below the ground-level. Its ground-plan is simple. There were seven small-sized shelves in the walls of the sanctum, of which only five are still to be found. There is a small cave in the middle of a quadrangular stone-piece. Legend says that water poured into this cave reaches the Jalpeś temple. It is a Śiva temple resembling the Jalpeśvar temple.¹ There is a stone cistern, a filled up well, and a half sunk pillar in a place called Kathua² near by, though others opine that so-called well might have been used for some other purposes. There is a triangular stone at Kathua which might have occupied the top of a temple. The local people call it the washerman's stone on which clothes are struck for washing.³ The image of the deity is missing, but the *mandapa* and *garbhagrha* are still standing.⁴

The barest foundation of another temple, the temple of Bhadeśvara, are to be found immediately below the high embankment of the New Maynaguri Railway station.⁵

To the east of the New Maynaguri railway station there is a temple of Petkati Devi. It is at a distance of about 1.6 km. from the temple of Sodar Khai. It contains the image of Chamunda, who is locally called Petkati. The image, seated in *lalitasana*, has a height of 1.42 metres. The stele has an ellipsoid top and is said to be a product of Eastern Indian baroque.⁶

ODLABARI—A village (J. L. No. 20) in Mal police station with a population of 4,773 in 1971, it is 8 miles (13 km.) from Mal. It is situated very near Bagrakot. A good market, a post office, a high school, and a health centre are there. It has a railway

¹ A. Mitra — *op. cit.*, p. 148.

² *Loc. cit.*

³ S. Bhattacharya and M. Bhattacharya — 'Jalpāiguri Pratnakirti' (in Bengali), in *Jalpāiguri District Centenary Souvenir: 1869-1968*, ed. C. C. Sanval and others, Jalpāiguri, 1970, p. 402.

⁴ A. Banerji — 'Temples of Jalpāiguri', in *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Vol. XIII, Nos. 1-4, 1971, p. 197.

⁵ *loc. cit.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

station on the Katihar-Lumding section of the North-East Frontier Railway. It is surrounded by four tea gardens.

PURBADEHAR — A walk of about 11.27 km. along N.H. No. 31 from Maynaguri takes one to Huchhludanga, just before reaching the Jaldhaka river. From there a *kutchā* road for about 4.83 km. takes one to this place (J. L. No. 80) in Maynaguri police station, noted for its temple. A few metres before the temple is reached, there is the Chukchuka river. There is a tank, having little water in it, to the east of the temple. The temple is situated on a big hump. Numerous bricks are strewn in the vicinity.

Sculptured stone-pieces lie strewn in the area, amidst which the stone-temple towers high. The upper portion of the temple was renovated by brick-work a few years back. The sculpture on a few stone-pieces suggest that they belonged to a *rekha-deul*.

RAJABHATKHAHA — A junction station on the metre gauge of the North-East Frontier Railway situated 11 km. north of Alipur Duār, it is the headquarters of the Buxa forest division, and is noted for timber export (*sal*, *sisu*, catechu, etc.). A road runs west from this place to the Torsa river connecting the tea gardens with this railway station. As to its name (literally, 'king's dining'), the legend says that after the Bhutan war the king of Bhutan had dinner here on being invited by the Koch king. A railway line branches off from here to Jayanti, 16 km. to the north, through deep forest, there being only one station, Buxa Road on the way.

The Raja Bhat Tea Garden (J. L. No. 44) in Kalchini police station had a population of 2,689 in 1971.

RAJGANJ — A noted village in *pargana* Baikunthapur, it is situated in the area between Jalpāiguri and Siliguri. This place is famed for the production of superior variety of jute. A road from Bhajanpur on the Titalya road passes through it and connects it with the railway station at Bhelakoba on the New Jalpāiguri-Haldibari section (broad gauge) of the North-East Frontier Railway. This road carries heavy traffic during jute cropping. The Raikat of the Baikunthapur estate owns the large market here to which jute is brought for sale. It has a police station and a Development Block of the same name.

RAMSHAI — The terminating station of the two-station branch line, namely, Lataguri-Ramshai branch of the North-East Frontier Railway, it is 9 km. away from Lataguri. It is on the right bank of the Jaldhaka river with the Lower Tondou forest on the west and the Daina forest across the river on the east.

Also called Ramshai Hat, it is connected by road with Chalsa, Nagrakata, Maynaguri, Gairkata, etc. Big games for shooting are there in the neighbouring forests, the jungle between the Jaldhaka and Daina rivers being the favourite haunt of tigers.

The Ramshai Forest (J. L. No. 50) in Dhupguri police station had a population of 1,456 in 1971, while the Ramshai Tea Estate (J. L. No. 9) in Maynaguri police station had a population of 1,184 at that time. Before the construction of the eastern extension of the railway to Madari Hat, traffic to and from the tea gardens to the east of the Jaldhaka had to use this station.

SANNYASIR HAT — Also called Sannyasi Kata (J. L. No. 27) in Rajganj police station, this is a famous spot in Sikarpur tea gardens area, and is said to be so named after a Sannyasi, i.e. a sage. According to the legend he was Bhabani Pathak, a character in Bankim Chandra's novel, '*Devī Chaudhurānī*'. The temple here looks like a Buddhist pagoda. Local people say it was constructed by one Scott in not very distant past. Although the base of the temple is a *pucca* construction, the other accessories including the icon are wooden. At the entrance to the temple there is the icon of an ox — made of white stone — which faces the temple. On the three steps of the staircase leading to the temple there are seated three figures of lions made of stone. The place had a population of 11,625 in 1971.

सत्यमेव जयते



सत्यमेव जयते

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INDEX

A

- A.C.C. and N.C.C., 267
 Ādhiārs, 208, 209, 210
 Adult education, 264, 265
 Agricultural — diseases and pests,
 108-09
 — implements, 106, 109, 110,
 149
 — income tax, 214, 237
 — labour, 182, 186
 — loans, 141, 146, 147, 148
 — Marketing, 149-50, 230
 Agriculture, 99-110, 229-31
 Alaikuri, 15, 22
 Alāuddīn Hussain Shāh, 53, 54
 Alipur Duār/Alipur Duārs,
 — Block I, 106, 107, 129, 145,
 150, 190, 213, 231,
 233, 242, 243, 244,
 245, 253, 254
 Block II, 106, 129, 145, 150,
 190, 192, 213, 231,
 233, 242, 243, 244,
 245, 253, 254
 Municipality, 4, 95, 249-50,
 290, 291, 318
 — Police Station, 3, 70, 112,
 127, 146, 227, 241, 285,
 303, 318
 — Rly. Jn., 4, 95, 167, 168,
 190, 318
 — Subdivision, 1, 2, 3, 6, 62,
 67, 72, 75, 76, 87, 127,
 172, 190, 201, 204, 205,
 208, 211, 212, 215, 218,
 223, 224, 225, 227, 230,
 232, 233, 234, 235, 240,
 262, 318
 — Town, 15, 16, 18, 38, 63,
 95, 113, 118, 123, 138,
 139, 141, 147, 151, 165,
 170, 171, 172, 183, 195,
 221, 234, 240, 264, 266,
 274, 286, 318
 'Āli the Mech', 52, 86
 Anchāl Panchayat, 4, 242-44, 245,
 252

- Anchalik Parishad, 242, 252, 253
 Animal Husbandry, 110-14, 231
 Anti-leprosy, 268
 Anti-malaria, 275, 288
 Anti-partition movement, 64
 Anti-Tuberculosis, 286
 Artificial Insemination, 112, 113
 Assam Link Railway, 167, 168

B

- Badganga Rock inscription, 49
 Bāgmāti, 52
 Bagrakot, 167, 168, 169, 318
 Bahē, 77, 80
 Baikunthapur, 55, 57, 58, 59, 61,
 62, 78, 199, 200, 201, 203-04,
 246, 315, 323
 — Forest, 12, 13, 30, 31, 60,
 115, 233
 — Raikats of, 55, 59, 115, 199,
 200, 201, 203, 328
 Banks, Commercial, 138-39
 Banks, Co-operative, 139-40, 141,
 146, 147, 148
 Barnes, 18, 19, 109, 167, 319
 Bāsudevānārāyan, 57
 Batriśhāzāri, Raikat of (See
 Baikunthapur, Raikat of)
 Bengal Duārs Railway, 166-67
 Bengali, 77, 78, 80, 81
 Bentley (Dr.), 272, 274-75
 Berubari Union, 7
 Bhagadatta, 48
 Bhandani, 84
 Bharat Scouts & Guides, 267
 Bhelakoba, 138, 166, 167, 169
 Birpārā, 67, 69, 70, 122, 123,
 135, 136, 138, 165, 170, 173, 227,
 234
 Births, 281
 Black water fever, 272
 Bodā, 199, 202-03
 Bodo — language, 11, 77, 80, 81,
 84
 — tribe, 11, 49
 Board of Revenue, 193
 Brahmaputra, 9, 12, 14, 18, 117

Brāhmoism, 85
 Buddhists, 82, 87
 Buxa Duars, 22, 23, 38, 201, 319
 — Cantonment, 9
 — forest division, 31, 32
 — hills, 21, 24, 25

C

Census, 67, 73, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 89
 Central Govt. set-up, 194-95
 Chalsa, 34, 138, 325
 Chapramari, 9, 23, 34, 169
 Charitable dispensary, 240, 241, 273
 Children's Park, 267
 Cholera, 271, 272, 273
 Christianity, 82, 85, 86-87, 91, 210-11
 Chukānidars, 208, 209, 210
 Church Missionary Society, 210-11, 268
 Climate, 35-41
 Clubs, 267
 Coal, 23
 Commercial banks, 138-39, 154, 156
 Commercial taxes, 215-16
 Communication, 163-73, 192
 Community development, 190-91
 Conservancy, 291
 Conveyances, 164
 Convictions, 219-20, 221
 Cooch Behar State Railway, 167
 Cooperative banks, 110, 139-40, 146, 147, 148, 154, 156
 Cooperative movement, 144, 146, 235
 Cooperative Societies, 109-10, 128-29, 144, 146, 147, 148, 149
 Cottage industry, 122, 125-30, 232-33
 Courts of justice, 222-25
 Credit agencies, 139, 140, 141, 146, 154, 155, 156
 Credit facilities, 109, 128, 129, 139, 141, 146, 147
 Credit Societies, 139, 141, 146, 147, 148

Crimes, 218-19, 220
 Cropped area, 99, 104, 107
 Crops, 103-06, 108
 Cultivable lands, 99, 100, 204, 205, 212
 Cultivable waste, 99, 100, 121
 Cultivators, 154, 155, 156, 181, 182, 186
 Cultural Societies, 267
 Current fallow, 99, 204, 205

D

Dak bungalows, 170-71, 239, 240, 241
 Dam-Dim, 169, 320
 Darpadeva, 54, 60, 61, 200, 201
 Death, 271, 272, 273, 278-79, 280, 281, 282, 296
 Debts, 142-44, 152, 153, 154, 155
 Demarcation of boundary, 4-8
 Deva Pala, 50
 Development Blocks, 4, 106, 107, 114, 145, 190-91, 242
 Devi Manthani, 84
 Dhardhora, 14, 44
 Dharta, 13, 19, 20, 47
 Dharmadeva, 59
 Dharmasāla, 171
 Dhokrā, 122
 Dhupguri,
 — Block, 106, 107, 145, 150, 151, 190, 192, 231, 233, 242, 243, 244, 245, 252, 253
 — Police Station, 3, 70, 112, 138, 171, 213, 220, 227, 241, 285, 319
 — Town, 4, 96, 230, 240, 319
 Dhvaja Kings, 53, 54
 Diana forest range, 34
 Diesel station, 122
 Dima, 8, 15, 22
 Dinah, 16, 22
 Dinanārāyan, 58
 Dispensary, 273
 District Board, 239-40, 274, 275
 District Library Association, 265-66
 District Road, 164
 District School Board, 239

Domestic Service, 177
 Domohani, 4, 19, 96, 102, 103,
 264, 320
 Drainage, 248, 291
 Droughts, 117, 120
 Duārs, 21, 22, 24, 25, 103, 119,
 124
 Duduyā, 6, 14
 Dulali, 47
 Durlabhnārāyan, 52-53

E

East India Company, 59, 60, 61,
 63, 200-01
 Education, 192, 247, 254-68
 Education — Adult, 264, 265
 — Backward classes, 263
 — Collegiate, 261-62, 263
 — Missionary, 268
 — Physical, 266
 — Primary, 258-60, 267
 — Secondary, 255-58
 — Social, 264, 265, 266
 — Tea gardens, 267
 Elections, 304-14
 Emigration, 72
 Employment Exchange, 188-90
Eri Chādar, 122
 Ericulture, 122, 127, 303
 Excise, Central, 215
 Excise, State, 214-15
 Export trade, 170
 Extremist movement, 64, 65

F

Fairs and festivals, 160-62
 Falakata, 23, 38, 96, 170, 173,
 240, 274, 320
 — Block, 106, 107, 145, 150,
 190, 192, 233, 242, 243,
 244, 245, 252, 253
 Police Station, 3, 70, 76,
 100, 103, 112, 138, 171,
 213, 220, 227, 230, 241,
 285, 303, 320
 Family Budget, 187-88
 Family Planning, 286-88
 Famine, 117, 120
Faringāti, 105
 Fatapukur, 23

Fauna, 32-5
 Ferries, 170, 241
 Fever, 270, 271, 272
 Fisheries, 115, 232
 Flood, 16-20, 42-46, 101, 117-20,
 135
 — Control, 20, 42-6, 195-96
 — relief, 119
 — Schemes, 20, 42-6, 196
 Flora, 27-30
 Fodder crops, 110-11
 Food Adulteration, 290
 Food Corporation of India, 198
 Forest, 8, 9, 27, 30-32, 33, 34,
 99, 115-17, 233-34
 — Acts, 32-5
 — income & expenditure, 116,
 214
 Formation of district, 4-8, 204
 Fort of Nal Rāja, 321

G

Gadādhara, 19, 43, 44, 45
 Gairkata/Goyerkata, 14, 119, 138,
 320
 Game Laws, 35
 Game sanctuary, 32, 322
 Gaopata, 21, 125
 Garh Mendabari, 321-22
 Gāro, 210
 Garumārā, 34, 325
 Gazaldoba, 130
 General Elections, 304-14
 Geology, 21-26
 Gish, 11, 12, 13, 19
 Glentāni, 16
 Gram Panchayats, 4, 244, 253
 Ground Water, 23
 Growth of population, 67, 71, 72-6

H

Hamiltonganj, 135, 136, 139, 301,
 322
 Handloom, 129
 Hargovinda Kāthām, 205
 Harjora, 50
 Hāsimārā, 14, 32, 138, 168, 169,
 172, 173, 321, 322

Hāt Buses, 164, 165
Hāts & Markets, 157-59
Hedāyet Ali, 205-06
 Higher Secondary Schools, 256
 High Schools, 254, 255-56
 Hindi, 78-9, 81
 Hinduism, 77, 81, 82
 Hindusthāni, 78
 Ho, 85, 87, 89, 91
 Hollong Forest Lodge, 233-34, 325
 Houses, 92-4
 Hydro-electric, 102, 122, 123

I

Immigrants, 72, 73, 78, 86
 Immigration, 72, 77, 78, 81
 Income tax, 215
 Indebtedness, 142-44, 152, 153
 Indian Tea Planters' Association, 133
 Indo-Mongoloid, 50-51
 Industrial disputes, 136-37
 — Labour Welfare, 135-36
 — loan, 139, 144
 — Potential, 135
 Industries, 122-37
 — Cottage and Small-scale, 125-27
 — Old time, 122
 — State assistance to, 127-30
 Infant death, 279-80, 281
 Information & Public Relations, 236
 Inheritance, 89
 Irrigation, 100-03, 192
 Islam, 52, 82, 86
 Inspection bungalows, 170-71, 241

J

Jails and lock-ups, 221-22
 Jains, 82, 87
 Jaldāpārā, 32, 34, 233-34, 322, 325
 Jaldhāka (R), 9, 16, 17, 19, 20, 58, 100, 115, 119
 — Hydel Project, 122, 123
 Jainanārāyan, 57
 Jalpāiguri,
 — Block, 106, 129, 145, 150, 190, 192, 231, 233, 242, 243, 244, 245, 252, 253

— Cantonment, 61, 63
 — District, 1, 2, 15, 21, 22, 30, 31, 33, 38, 48, 52, 58, 62, 63, 67, 69, 71-2, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 82, 83, 87, 93, 95, 99, 101, 102, 105, 107, 108, 121, 122, 124, 126, 127, 128, 130, 133, 134, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144, 145, 146, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 160, 163, 171-72, 173, 174, 175, 176, 178-80, 181, 185, 189, 192, 193, 194, 196, 197, 199, 201, 206, 207, 209, 213, 214, 215, 217, 218, 219, 220, 222, 223, 225, 226, 251, 255-56, 257-58, 259, 260, 261, 262, 264, 269, 272, 273, 277, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 287, 288, 289, 290, 292, 293-300
 — Engineering College, 44, 263
 — Forest division, 31
 — Municipality, 4, 66, 95, 119, 174, 246-49, 291, 322-23
 — Police Station, 3, 69, 124, 146, 151, 227, 241, 285, 322-23
 — Railway Station, 4, 47, 166
 — (Sadar) Subdivision, 1, 2, 3, 32, 59-60, 62, 67, 75, 76, 172, 190, 204, 207, 212, 213, 216, 224, 225, 227, 232, 235, 236, 237, 240, 262
 town, 1, 8, 12, 14, 18, 20, 38, 42, 43, 44, 45, 61, 63, 64, 65, 84, 86, 95, 113, 118, 119, 123, 138, 139, 141, 147, 151, 165, 170, 171, 172, 183-84, 188, 195, 197, 198, 221, 222, 230, 231, 234, 239, 240, 254, 255, 259-60, 264, 266, 273, 286, 288, 322-23

Jalpāiguri Engineering College, 44, 263

Jalpeś, 1, 83, 205, 270, 323-24

— Dighi, 315

— Melā, 324

Jalpeśvar Śiva, 83, 205

— Temple, 19, 53, 56, 163,
323-24

Jamuna, 12, 19

Janamat, 65

Jarda, 19, 323

Jayanti, 8, 22, 23, 25, 125

Jitari, 51

Jhum cultivation, 17

Jotedari tenures, 207

K

Kalchini, 165, 170, 173, 240

— Block, 106, 107, 139, 145,
190, 192, 233, 242, 243,
244, 245, 252, 253

— Police Station, 3, 38, 67, 70,
76, 138, 139, 213, 220,
227, 241, 285

Kaldari, 204

Kaljāni, 9, 15, 17, 20

Kalna (Rehati), 6, 14

Kāmāhyaguri, 126, 169, 172, 324

Kāmarūpa, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54,
55, 56, 199

Kāmarūpa Buranjī, 51

Kamauli Copper-plate grant, 51

Kamboja, 50

Karala, 11, 12, 14, 19, 42, 43, 44,
45, 47

Karatoyā, 10, 12, 18, 19, 50, 52,
53, 56

Kirāta, 48, 51

Koches, 49, 52, 55, 56, 77, 80, 81,
83, 84

Kumārgrām, 38, 240, 274, 324

— Block, 106, 107, 129, 145,
150, 190, 192, 233, 242,
243, 244, 245, 252, 253

— Police Station, 3, 70, 112,
171, 213, 220, 227, 241,
285, 303, 324

Kurukh-Oraon, 77, 78

L

Labour, 116, 135-36, 182, 186,
234-35, 301

— Organisations, 177-80

— Welfare, 135-36, 234-35, 301

Lakshminārāyan, 56

Land reclamation, 99, 192

— reforms (present system).
211-12

— Tenure system, 206-07

— Utilisation, 99

Land revenue, demand and
collection, 213

— History of, 199-211

— Mughal period, 199-200

— Present system, 211-13

Lataguri, 324-25

Learned profession, 175, 177

Library, 265, 266, 269

Life Insurance Corporation 141,
198

Linguistic picture, 77-81

Lish, 11, 13, 19

Literacy, 260-61

Livelihood classes, 181-82

Live-stock, 114, 231

Local Boards, 240

Lok Sabha, 308-10, 312-14

M

Madarihāt, 167, 168, 234, 240, 325

— Block, 106, 107, 145, 150,
190, 192, 233, 242, 243,
244, 245, 252, 253

— Police Station, 3, 67, 70,
138, 213, 220, 227, 241,
285, 303

Madhesi, 80, 81, 85, 86

Madrasa, 256

Mahābhārat, 10, 48

Mahākāl, 83

Mahānandā, Mahānadi, Mahaldi,
8, 9, 10, 56, 58

Mahindranārāyan, 57

Maināguri, 4, 19, 20, 23, 96, 112,
165, 170, 173, 240, 264, 274,
286, 325-26

— Block, 106, 129, 145, 190,
192, 231, 233, 242, 243,
244, 245, 252, 253

Police Station, 3, 53, 67,
69, 119, 124, 138, 171,
213, 220, 227, 241, 285

- Māl, 4, 96, 122, 165, 167, 170,
240, 326
— Block, 106, 107, 145, 150,
190, 192, 231, 233, 242,
243, 244, 245, 252, 253
— Police Station, 3, 69, 119,
124, 138, 170, 173, 213,
220, 227, 241, 285, 303
- Malaria, 270, 271
- Malpāhāri, 81, 91, 92
- Manasā, 83, 84
- Māl̥jotedārs, 207
- Mandalghāt, 12, 19, 20, 43, 45,
166, 169
- Manufacture of tea, 132
- Markets, 157-59, 185, 320, 324, 328
- Marriage, 89-92, 97-8
- Matiali, 135, 136, 167, 173, 301,
326
— Block, 106, 107, 145, 190,
192, 231, 233, 242, 243,
244, 245, 252, 253
— Police Station, 3, 67, 69,
124, 138, 213, 220, 227,
241, 285
- Meches, 48, 49, 52, 54, 56, 77, 81,
83, 84, 86, 87, 89, 91, 92, 115,
210
- Medical Institutions, 283, 285, 297-
300
- Metalled roads, 163
- Middle School, 254, 257-58
- Migration, 73
- Minerals, 25-6, 124-25
- Mineral Spring, 16
- Minimum wages, 136, 186-87, 234
- Modnārāyan, 56, 57
- Mohitnagar, 112, 230, 231-32
- Mogalkata Police out post, 64
- Mughal invasion, 56-7, 58, 59,
189-200
— Power, 199-200, 203
- Mujnai, 14
- Muktivāni, 65
- Mulāndārs, 208
- Multipurpose schools, 256
- Mundā, 80, 81, 85, 87, 89, 91, 92
- Municipality, 163, 174, 175, 176
246-50
- Murti, 16
- Muslims, 60, 77, 79, 81, 82, 86,
89, 91, 92, 115
- Mutiny, 1857, 63
- N
- Nāgrākātā, 38, 173, 268, 326
— Block, 106, 107, 145, 190,
192, 233, 242, 243, 244,
245, 252, 253
— Police Station, 3, 69, 213,
220, 227, 241, 285
- Nal-Rājār Garh, 321
- Naranārāyan, 56, 321-22
- National Highway, 163
- National School, 64
- Nehru-Noon Agreement, 7
- Nepali-based language, 78
- New Jalpaiguri, 138, 167, 169
- New Maynāguri, 327
- Newspapers, 314-15
- Nidhanpur grant, 49
- Nīlāmbār, 53, 54, 163
- Non-Cooperation movement, 65
- North Bengal Flood Control Board,
195
- North Bengal Flood Control Com-
mission, 20, 195-96
- North Bengal State Railway, 166
- NBSTC, (North Bengal State
Transport Corporation), 164,
197
- North Bengal University, 262
- Nurses' Training, 263
- ()
- Odlābāri (Oodlabari), 123, 169,
173, 327-28
- Orāons, 77, 81, 85, 86, 89, 91,
92, 210
- Organisations, Labour, 177-80
— Transport, 173
- Panga, 12, 18, 19, 43, 49
- Pattānidārs, 207-08
- Personal services, 177
- Pharmacy Training Centre, 263,
289
- Phota, 122

Piggery, 111, 231
 Plantation workers, 64, 65, 87,
 186, 187, 234, 267, 285
 Plywood, 116, 117
 Police & guards, 220-21
 Political Parties, 65-6, 310-14
 Political Prisoners' Camp (See
 Buxa Cantonment)
 Polytechnic, 11, 42, 263
 Population, 67-82
 — growth of, 67, 71, 72-6
 — rural, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71,
 72, 75
 — urban, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71,
 72, 75
 Post and Telegraph, 171-72, 195
 Post office savings banks, 138, 140
 Poultry, 112, 114, 231-32
 Power supply, 122-24, 196-97
 Pragjyotisha, 48, 49, 50
 Pralambha, 50
 Prāṇnārāyaṇ, 56, 323, 324
 Pre-primary education, 259-60
 Price level, 182-85
 Primary education, 258-59
 Primary schools, 247, 254, 255,
 258-59
 Principal diseases, 270-73, 281-82,
 293-95
 Production of tea, 134-35
 Prohibition, 301
 Prosecution & conviction, 219-20,
 227, 228
 Public health, 239, 240, 241, 247,
 250
 Public Works Department, 163, 229
 — (Roads), 163, 229

Q

Quit India movement, 66

R

Rabhas, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 91, 92,
 93, 94
 Radcliffe Award, 7, 66
 Raidak, 9, 14, 15-6, 17, 84, 100,
 115
 Rāikat of Baikunṭhapur (Batriś-

hāzārī), 55, 56, 57, 58, 59-60,
 200, 201, 203, 204, 315, 328
 — Pārā, 64, 317
 Rail roads, 166-70
 Rājābhātkhāwā, 167, 169, 170, 328
 Rajbansis, 48, 77, 80, 82, 83, 89,
 91, 92, 115, 264
 Rajganj, 240
 — Block, 106, 129, 145, 190,
 192, 231, 233, 242, 243,
 244, 245, 252, 253
 — Police Station, 3, 69, 76,
 105, 138, 146, 213, 216,
 220, 227, 241, 285
 Rāmkrishṇa Mission, 85
 Ramshaihat, 166, 167, 170, 328-29
 Rehti, 14, 21
 Reform movement, 85
 Religion, 82-7
 Renigango, 9
 Rennells' survey, 12
 Rent, 203-04, 205, 208-09
 Reserve forest, 8, 31, 115
 Revenue, 66, 116, 193, 199, 201,
 204, 205, 206, 213-17
 — survey, 4
 Roads, 163-64, 238, 239, 241, 249
 Road Cess Committee, 238-39
 Road Transport, 163-64
 Rudrasimha's Buranji, 52
 Ruk ruka, 14, 44
 Runtuk and Basek, 84, 85
 Rupnārāyaṇ, 57
 Rural electrification, 123, 124, 197
 Rural population, 67, 68, 69, 70,
 71, 72, 75

S

Sadani (Sadri), 79, 80, 81, 85
Sadānīra, 10, 11
 Sadar Subdivision (See Jalpaiguri)
 Sakti worship, 83-84
Sāl, 8, 9, 30, 31, 115, 116
 Sanitation, 272, 289
 Sankosh, 8, 9, 14, 16, 17, 54, 115
 Sannyāsikata, 328
Sannyāsīs, 60, 61
 Sanskrit education, 264, 265, 266
 Santali, 80

- Santals, 82, 85, 87, 89, 91, 92, 210, 221
 Satali, 135, 136, 301
Satyāgraha movement, 64
 Scheduled Castes, 142-44, 263-64, 302-03
 Scheduled Tribe, 142-44, 263-64, 302-03
 Scientific Agriculture, 106
 School health, 286
 Schools, 254-60
 Secondary Education, 255-58
 Seed, 107, 230
 — farms, 107, 230
 Sericulture, 233, 324
 Sikhs, 82, 87
 Sili Torsa, 14
 Sinchula hills, 9, 319-20
 Sishyasirinha (Śiśu), 55, 56, 199, 203
 Śiva — worship, 83-4, 323
 Small-pox, 273, 274
 Small-Scale Industry, 122, 125-30, 144, 145
 Social education, 192, 265
 Social Welfare, 265
 South Berubari Union No. 12, 7
 Spining and weaving school, 64
 Sports Association, 266, 267
 Springs, 16
 Śrī Bhutivarman, 49
 Stadium, 267
 State Assistance, Agriculture, 107, 108, 109, 110, 229-30
 — Industries, 127-28, 129, 130, 144, 145, 232-33
 State Highway, 164
 Sthitavarman, 49
 Storage facilities, 151
 Sukhāni subdivision, 1, 62
 Survey and Settlement, 204-06, 210-11, 212
 Susthitavarman, 49
 Swadesi industry, 64
 — movement, 64
 — Textile mill, 64
- T
- Tahutdārs*, 202
 Tantricism, 83, 84, 87
 Tashigaon, 16
 Taxes, Agricultural income, 214
 — Commercial, 215-16
 — Income, 215
 — Motor Vehicles Registration, 216-17
 Tea, 8, 62, 63, 65, 72, 78, 130-86, 149, 170, 213, 267, 285, 318, 319, 320, 321, 325, 326
 — Cultivation, 131-33, 135, 206, 207
 — industry, 62, 72
 — estates, 131, 134
 — gardens, 63, 72
 Tea-grants, 206, 207, 213
 — labourers, 65, 72, 87, 186, 187, 239, 267, 285
 — plantation, 62, 72, 131
 — Planters' Association, 133-34
 Teachers' Training, 262
 Teak, 116
 'Tebhāgā Movement', 209-10
 Technical training centre, 262-63
 Telephone Exchange, 172-73
 Terrorist movement, 64, 65
 Theosophical Lodge, 85, 283
 Tibetan Refugee Lama Asrama, 319
 Tibeto-Burman, 48, 51, 56, 77, 78, 80, 81
 — Mongoloid, 48, 56
 Timber, 17, 30, 31, 116, 117, 149
 Tiingyadeva, 51
 Tistā (Teesta) or Dista, 1, 3, 8, 9, 10-12, 13, 18-20, 22, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 52, 53, 60, 61, 84, 100, 102-03, 115, 170, 319
 — Barrage Project, 102-03
 — Basin, 18, 19
 'Tista Gun', 20, 47
 — flood, 18-20, 42-7
Tol, 264
 Torsā, 9, 14-5, 20, 21, 100, 115, 135, 170, 206, 210
 Toto, 81, 210
 — para, 210
 Tourist facilities, 170-71
 Trade Association, 151
 Transport facilities, 164-65, 170

U

Uncultivated Land, 99
 Union Boards, 240-41
 Unmetalled Roads, 163
 Untouchability, 65
 Upendranārāyaṇ, 58
 Upper Tandu Forest Range, 34
 Urbanization, 63, 95-6
 Urban population, 67, 68, 69, 70,
 71, 72, 75
 Urdu, 79

V

Vaccination, 113, 114, 247-48, 250,
 275, 289, 290
 Vaidyadeva, 51
 Vegetation, 26-30
 Vehicles, 164, 165-66, 217
 Veterinary, 114, 231
 — aid, 112-14, 231
 Vidhan Parishad, 314
 — Sabha, 304-08, 310-12
 Vikramadeva, 59
 Village road, 164
 Viśvasimha (Visu), 54, 55, 56,
 193
 Vital Statistics, 276-78
 Voluntary Social Services, 315-17

W

Wages, 136, 186-87
 Warehouses, 151

Waste land, 99, 204, 205, 206
 Water supply, 247, 249-50, 272,
 274, 276, 291, 292
 Water ways, 170
 Weights and measures, 235
 Welfare, backward classes, 263,
 302-03, 317
 — Child, 316
 — Labour, 135-36, 234-35, 301
 — Tribal, 263, 317
 — Women's 316
 — Youth, 266, 267

WBSEB, (West Bengal State Elec-
 tricity Board), 122-24, 196-97,
 248, 250

Western Duars, 1, 8, 58, 62, 100,
 103, 105, 115, 130, 131, 135,
 199, 201, 204, 205, 206, 254-55,
 271, 272

Wild Life, 32, 33, 34, 35, 322,
 325
 — Sanctuary, 32-4, 223-24,
 322, 325

Y

Youth Hostel, 267
 — Welfare, 266, 267
 Yuan Chwang, 10

Z

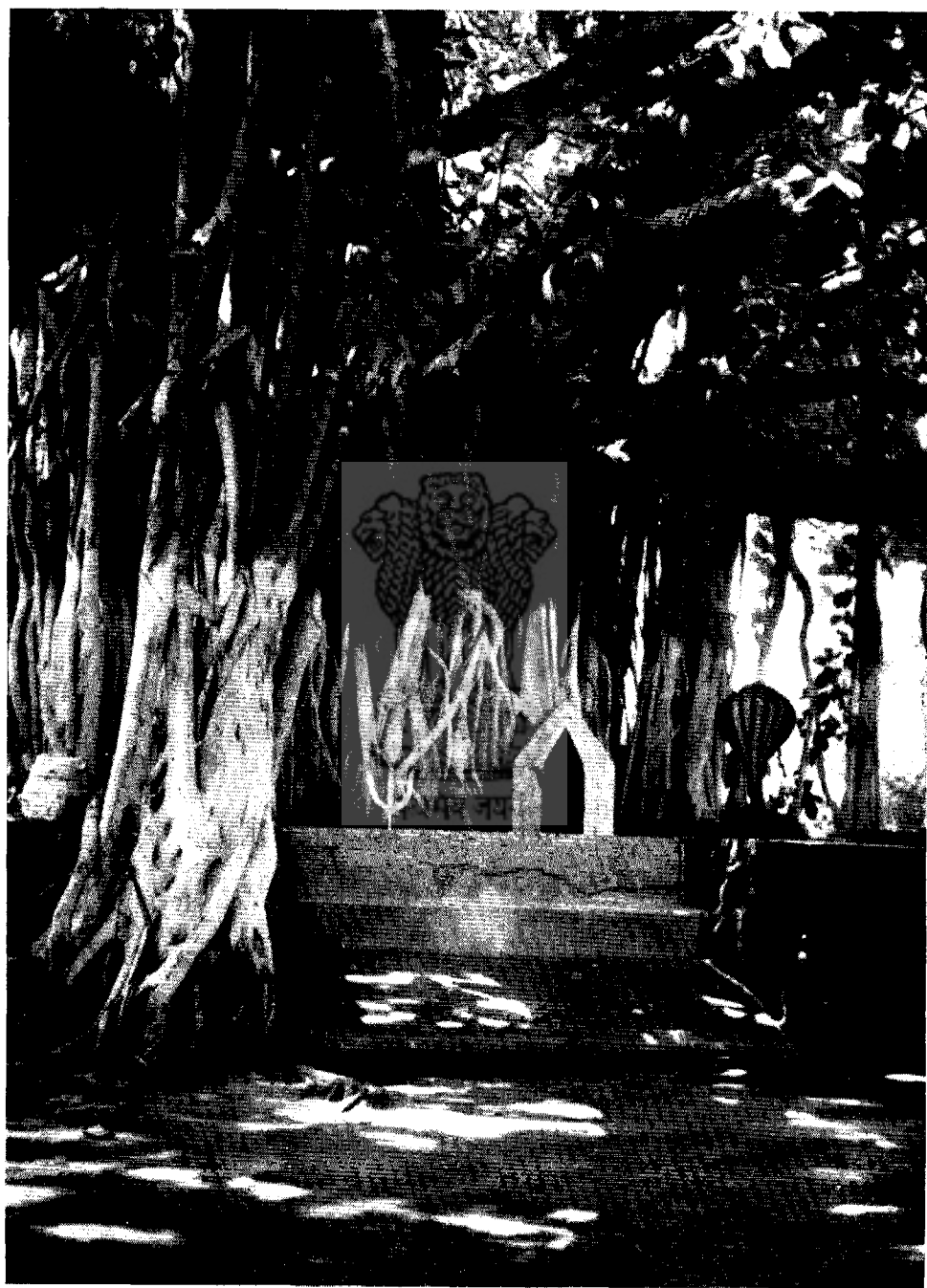
Zilla Parishad, 4, 163, 170, 175,
 176, 241, 251, 289, 291

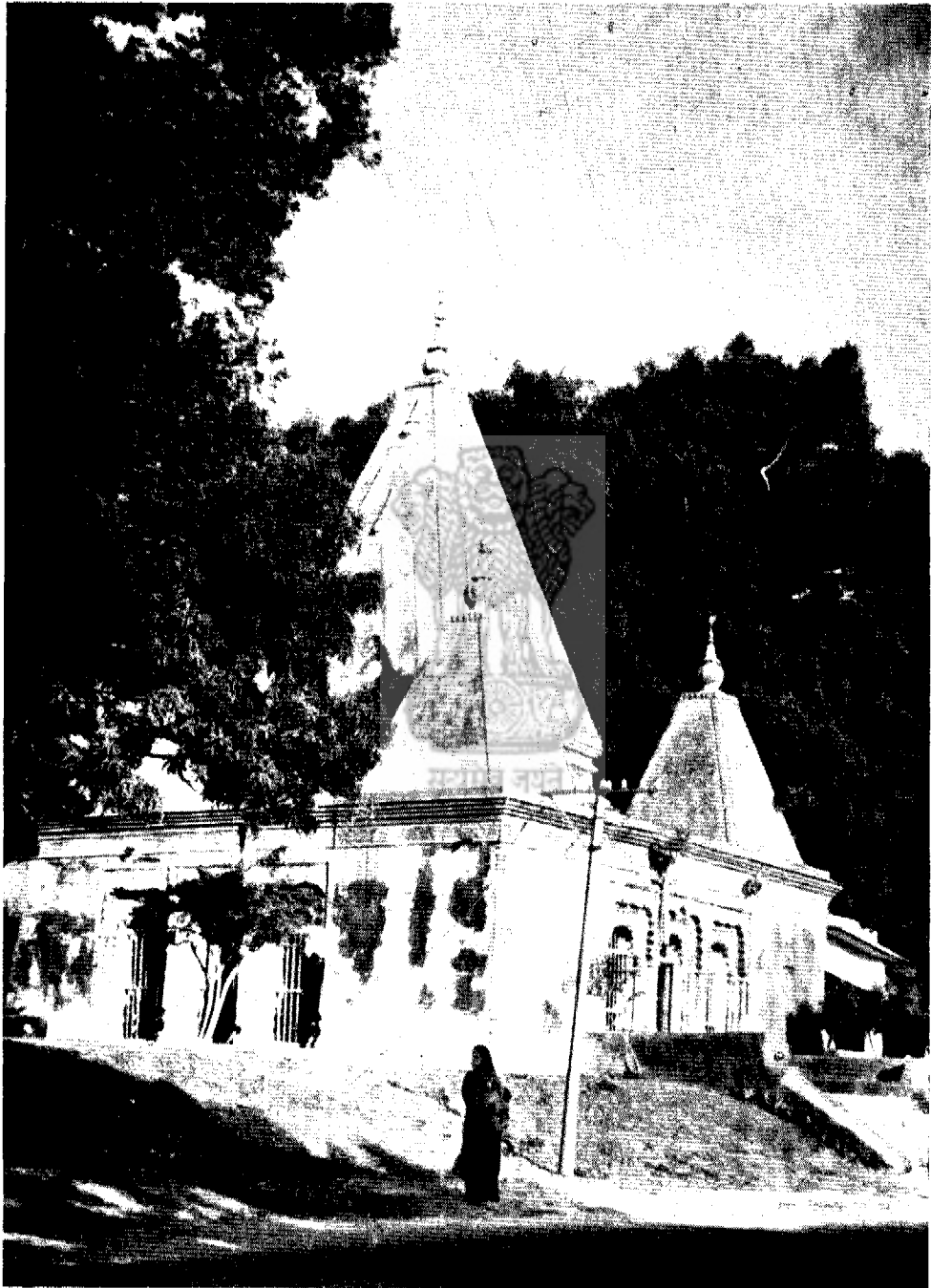
ERRATA

Page No.	Line	Instead of	Read
23	Foot-note-4 last line	Vol. 2	Vol. 11
105	Foot-note 2nd line	Calcutta, pp.	Calcutta, 1954, pp.
120	Foot-note 1st line	Calcutta, 1951	Calcutta, 1954
129	6th line from the top	Rāniganj	Rājganj
149	5th line from the top	fruits, jute, tobacco,	fruits, tobacco,
179	Last but one	Commercial Industries	Commerce and Industries
181	Table heading 2nd line	JALP IGURI	JALPĀIGURI
220	15th line from the top	Rāmganj	Rājganj
229	Foot-note 1st line	Final of the coal storages	Final year of the cold storages
230	Last but four	Coal Storage	Cold Storage
230	Last but three	Coal Storage	Cold Storage
246	Foot-note	J. P. Gruning	J. F. Gruning
316	Marginal note	Womens' Welfare	Women's Welfare
321	Foot-note-2 1st line	<i>Handbooks</i>	<i>Handbook</i>
326	Foot-note-2 last line	Jalpāiguri, 1971	Jalpāiguri, 1970

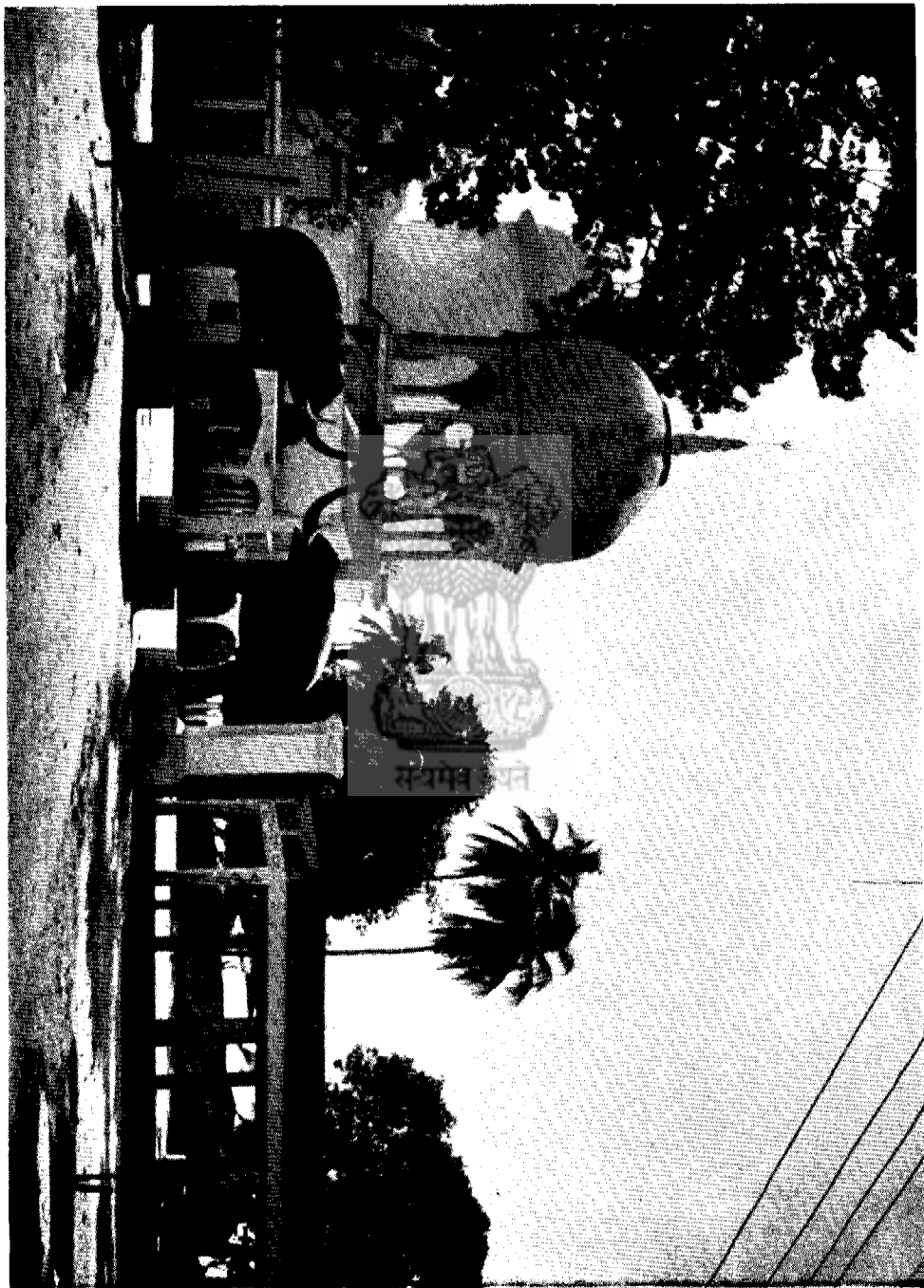


An old stone sculpture at Hichherdanga temple.





Siva temple at Jalpāguri.

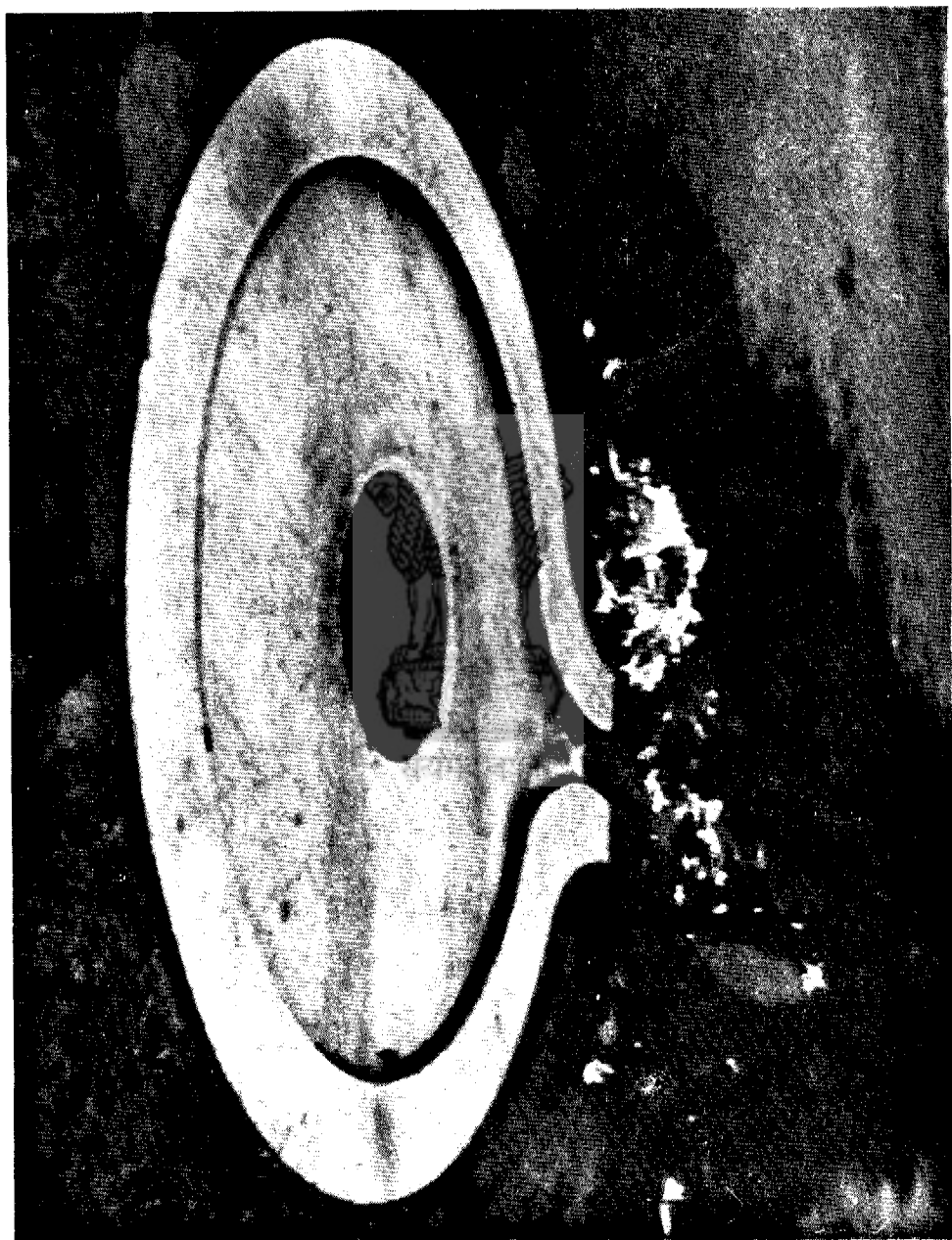


Main gateway of Jalpestara Siva temple, Jalpesti.



Temple of Jalpeśvīr Siva, Jalpeś.

Drev-pultian at Jalpexar Siva temple.

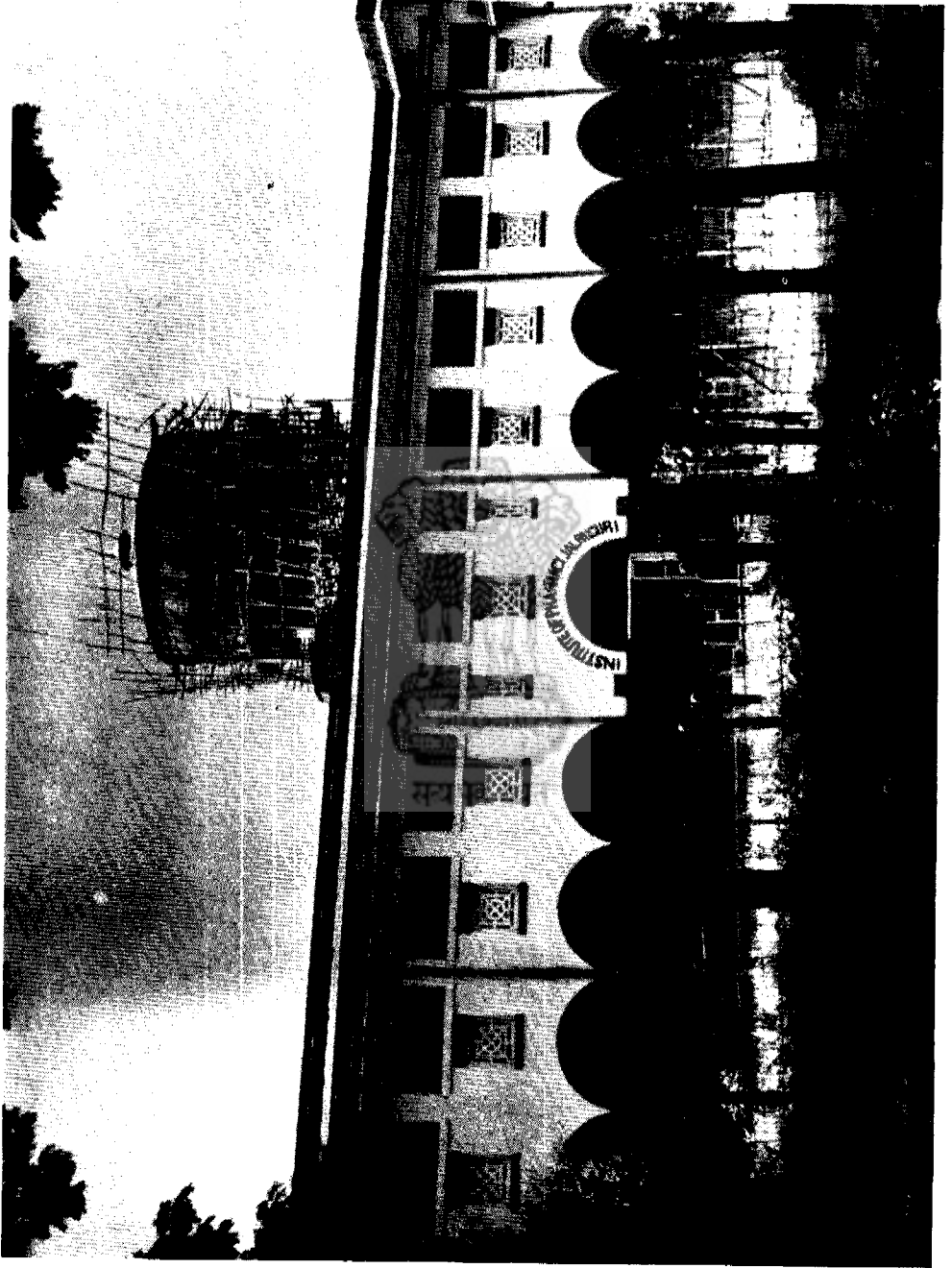




Old Mosque near Jalpaiguri Town.



The entrance to the Jalpāguri Engineering College.



Institute of Pharmacists, Jalpāguri.

PLATE N



A Rabhā male.



PLATE NI



A Mech woman with her ornaments.



Fotos of Totopará.



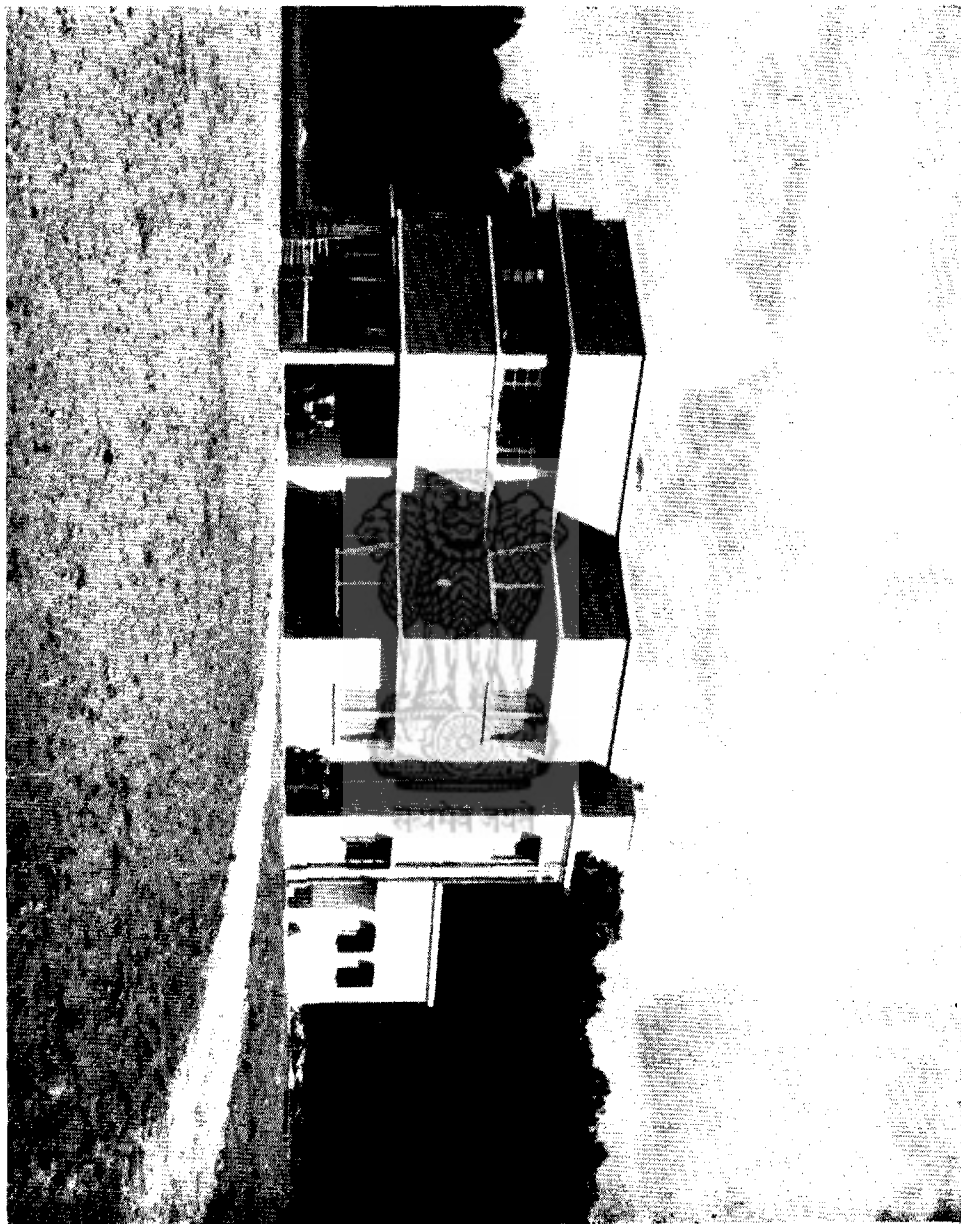
Fotos cutting flesh from a slaughtered cow.



An inside view of a protected forest.



Crossing the river at Jaldāpārā Games Sanctuary.

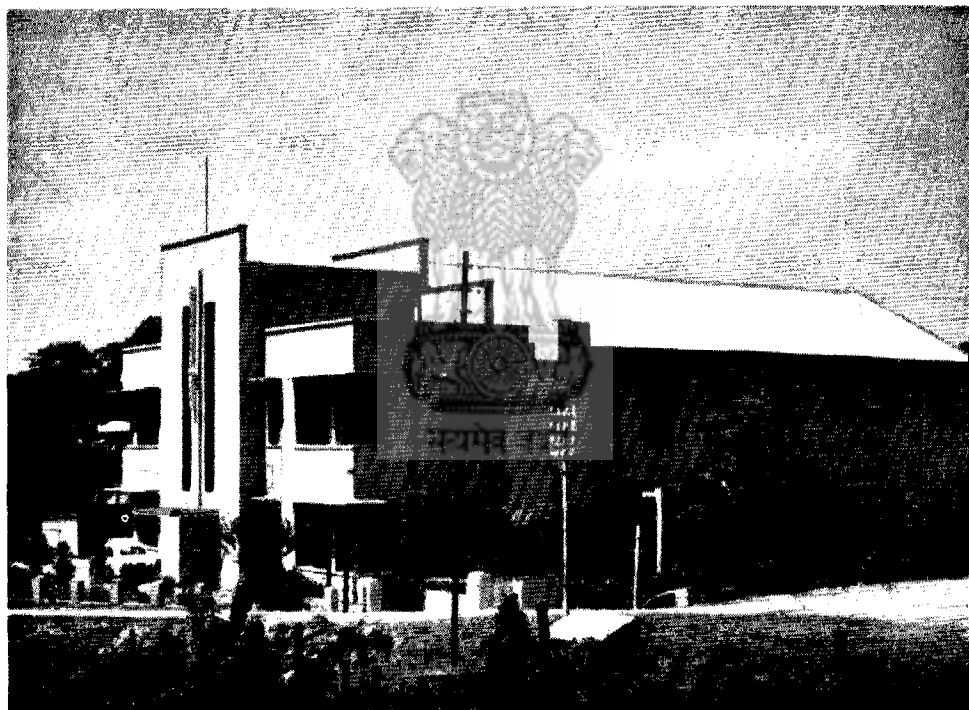


Jalidipāṇī Forest Bungalow.

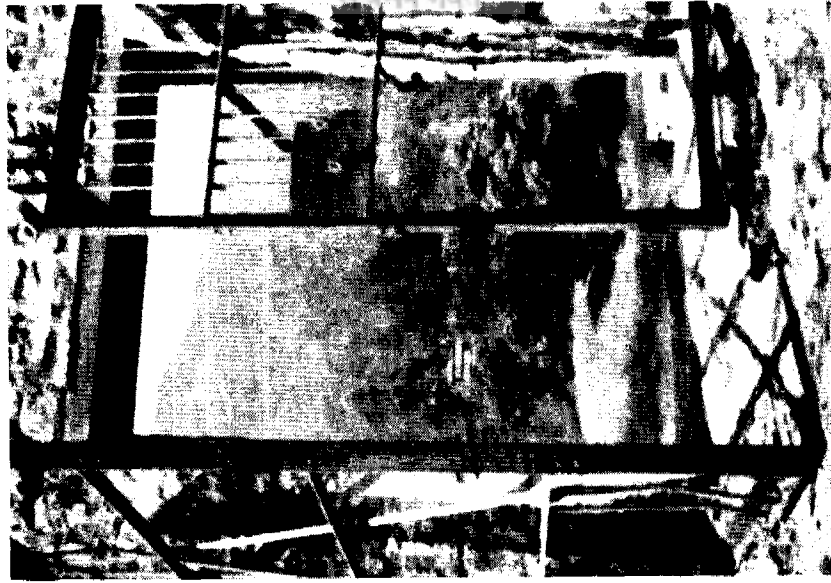


Plucking 'two leaves and a bud' in a tea garden.

PLATE XVIII



Tea Planters' Association Building, Jalpāiguri.



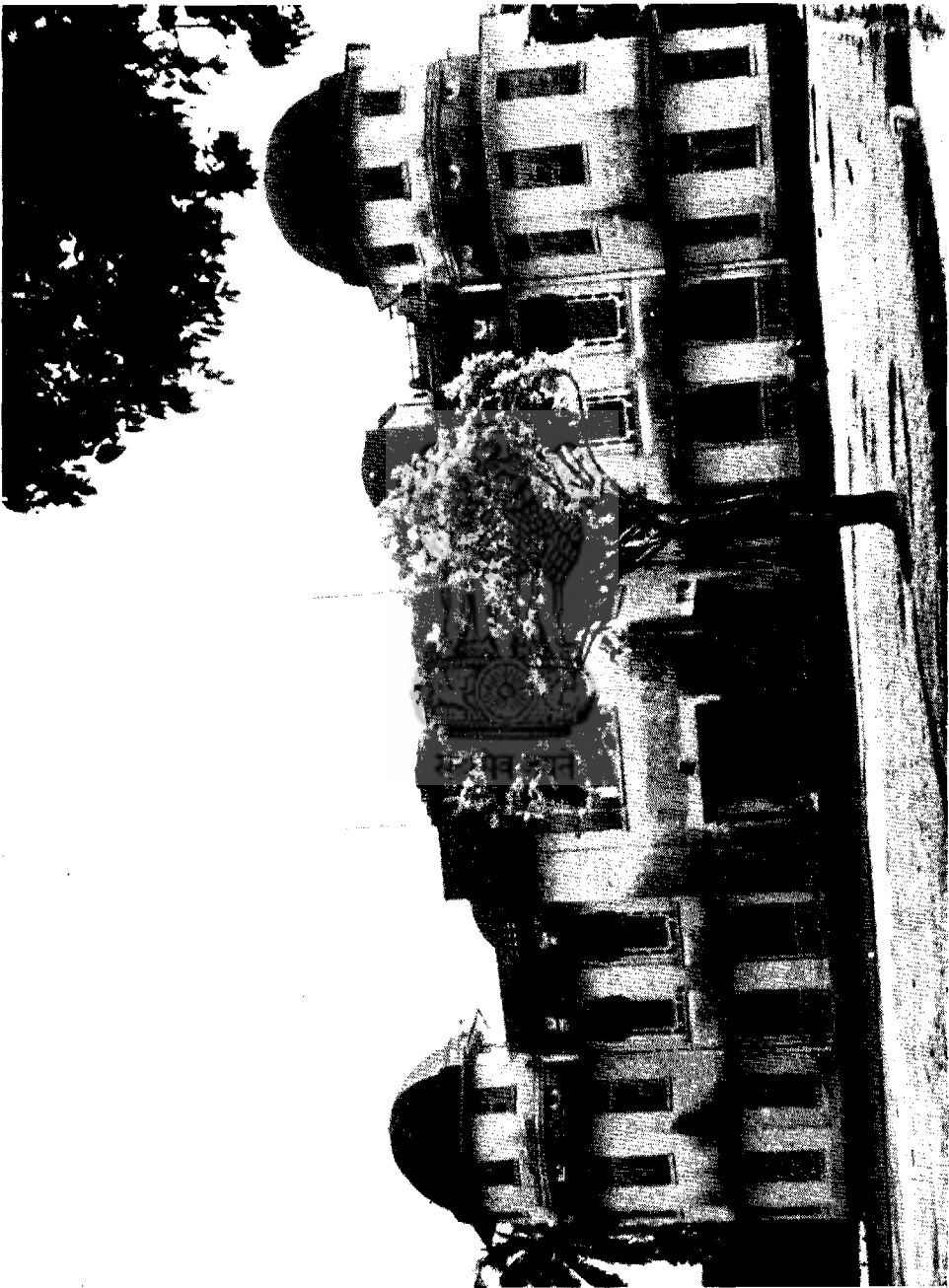
Buxa Duār Camp



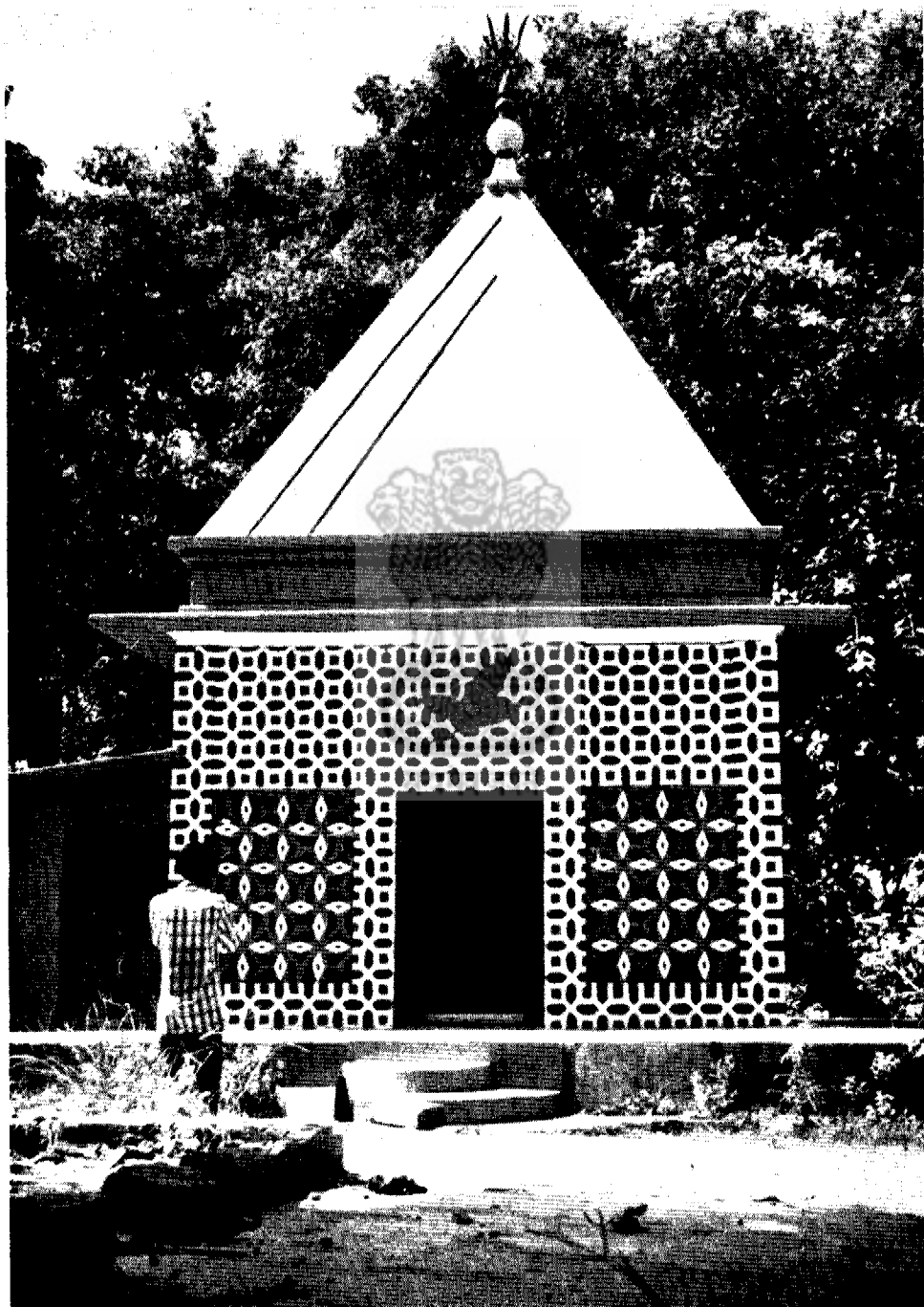
Prison cells at Buxa Duār Camp.



Rājān. Jalpaiguri.



Palace of Nawab Musbaraff Hussain in Jalpaiguri.



Devichandhurāpi temple, Samyāsra Hat.